

# BMA GUIDE TO EMPLOYING A YOUNG PERSON

WITH THE SUPPORT OF MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL



# Why Employ a Young Person?

**Fresh energy. Future talent. Real impact on your business and community.**

**Young workers bring curiosity, digital fluency and a community connection that customers notice. With the right structure and support, hiring a young person can lift service, grow your talent pipeline and strengthen your team culture.**

## ENERGY, SERVICE AND CULTURE SPARK

Young staff often lift the vibe—and customer satisfaction follows—their enthusiasm is contagious and strengthens team culture.

## TRAIN FOR YOUR WAY AND BUILD A LOYAL PIPELINE

Mould skills to your workplace needs and start growing tomorrow's shift leaders and store managers from inside your own team.

## PERSPECTIVE AND DIGITAL-NATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Fresh ideas for socials and in-store experience, natural ease with new digital tools (point of-sale updates, QR menus, inventory apps) and quicker adoption across the team.

## SCHEDULING AGILITY AND ROSTER RESILIENCE

After-school/weekend availability covers peak periods, and a small pool of trained young casuals gives reliable backup for sickness or events.

## LEADERSHIP LIFT FOR CURRENT WORKERS AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Mentoring a young person grows coaching skills and confidence in your 2ICs, while building your next layer of supervisors.

## QUALITY AND SAFETY NUDGE

Teaching the basics refreshes standards for the whole crew and surfaces hazards you may have stopped noticing.

## GOODWILL AND VISIBLE COMMUNITY IMPACT

Locals value businesses that invest in first jobs—it changes lives and customer notice businesses that step up.

## PEER REACH

Young staff authentically connect you to youth customers and families—word-of-mouth you can't buy.

## LOCAL TALENT LOYALTY

A great first job creates long-term loyalty—alumni come back for holidays and refer friends.

## SIMPLE WAYS TO START AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Host through a Group Training Organisation (they employ and you supervise), or use traineeship/apprenticeship pathways with provider support and training plans.

## POTENTIAL INCENTIVES

Some pathways include external assistance that reduces cost and risk to try it.

## INNOVATION LAB

Try new micro-ideas with a young person who is keen to experiment—a fresh display, a new Instagram Reel concept, or a quicker service flow.

## DIVERSITY DIVIDEND

Hiring across ages and different neurodivergent types makes problem-solving richer and teams more resilient.



Mount Alexander Business Awards — photo, Penny Ryan

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*They have all stepped up — they really are the hospitality superstars of the future. We will not have hospitality venues without encouraging and supporting young people in the workforce.*

Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns

“

*It's been great working here. It's really changed my life. I've finally been able to follow something I've been passionate about for most of my life, with a team that not only recognises we're learning, but wants us to learn.*

Arlo Volpato

## Why Employing Young People Matters

Young people can transform a workplace with their fresh energy and willingness to learn, especially when they're supported by experienced staff members. Investing in emerging talent not only shapes the future of local industries like hospitality, it also strengthens community connection and creates pathways that many young people might otherwise never access.

Shedshaker's commitment to developing young staff shows exactly how powerful that investment can be.

## FAQs

### At what age can I employ a young person?

In Victoria, most retail/hospitality “light work” can start from age 13.

Under 15 you'll need parental consent and a free youth employment permit that you'll find on the [vic.gov.au](http://vic.gov.au) website.

From 15–17 the usual workplace laws apply.

### What sorts of jobs can a young person do?

Start with safe, structured tasks: greeting and service, packing and labelling, basic prep, cleaning to a checklist, stock counts etc. Avoid high-risk work and tailor tasks to strengths.

### Do I have to pay their superannuation?

Under 18s: super is payable only if they work more than 30 hours in a week. For 18+, super applies to ordinary time earnings.

### Can I try someone unpaid first?

Only very short, supervised skill demonstrations

are lawful. If they do real work, pay them at the correct award rate.

A brief paid trial shift is the simple, compliant option.

### How do School-Based Apprenticeship or Traineeships actually work?

The student works paid hours with you (usually 1–2 days a week or set shifts) and completes accredited training with a TAFE/RTO. You get help with paperwork, a training plan, and support from the school and an AASN provider. Many employers start here to test the fit while building skills.

### What if it doesn't work out?

Set clear expectations early, give specific feedback, and schedule a short review after a few shifts. If the role isn't the right fit, close it respectfully and document what you've tried. (Your provider or school contact can help with conversations and next steps.)

## Ready to give a young person their start?

Visit [businessmountalexander.org.au](http://businessmountalexander.org.au) and click the Employing Young People tab on the home page and follow through the check list and links for all the information you need to sign up your next workplace superstar.

Here you'll find other resources like 'Neuro-Inclusive Onboarding for Young Workers' and how to find the correct award rates, as well as links to Group Training Organisations and other Victorian Government support pages.

## Business Community Opportunity

[businessmountalexander.org.au](http://businessmountalexander.org.au)

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