

## **The SDA and Woolworths withdraw legal proceedings after coming to mutually agreeable outcome**

**Wednesday, 26 August 2020:** The SDA and Woolworths Group will both withdraw their respective legal proceedings on the effective date of retail pay increases in financial year 2021 following further talks overnight.

Both Woolworths Group and the SDA had agreed there was uncertainty over the treatment of pay increases for team members covered by the Woolworths Supermarkets, BIG W, BWS and Dan Murphy's Enterprise Agreements (EAs).

This uncertainty followed the unprecedented decision by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to delay the implementation of the annual wage increase for the General Retail Industry Award (GRIA) until February 2021. The annual increase has historically taken effect on 1 July each year and the drafting in the EAs reflects this practice.

In line with the FWC timeline for the GRIA, Woolworths Group intended to implement the pay increases from 1 February 2021. It has now agreed to move this forward to 1 July 2020, and will back date payments to team members.

The SDA had filed proceedings in the Federal Court, and Woolworths Group had filed proceedings in the Fair Work Commission, seeking to have the uncertainty in the EAs clarified. Both parties will now withdraw proceedings.

### **Comments from SDA National Secretary Gerard Dwyer:**

"The SDA and Woolworths had disagreed on the interpretation of the wording in the EAs, but Woolworths has done the right thing by its team in bringing forward these pay increases ahead of the FWC schedule and should be congratulated for putting their team first.

"Our members are providing an essential service to the community through the crisis of our generation and deserve every bit of this pay increase.

"We call on other large retailers to follow Woolworths' lead on this issue and push through the Fair Work Commission's pay increases immediately."

### **Comments from Woolworths General Manager of Workplace Relations Hayley Baxendale:**

"We're pleased to have reached a mutually agreeable outcome with the SDA, which will provide a much quicker resolution for our team in these unsettling times.

"We care deeply for our team and feel that delivering these pay increases early - without lengthy legal proceedings - is just the right way to resolve the issue and move forward.

"Our frontline teams are doing an extraordinary job for our customers in the pandemic and we're incredibly grateful for everything they do."