



FURNITURE, BEDDING & UPHOLSTERY INDUSTRY BARGAINING COUNCIL, GREATER NORTHERN REGION

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**CIRCULAR 09/04**

**TO ALL EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE INDUSTRY**

Sir/Madam

**AMENDMENTS TO THE INDUSTRY'S COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

Please be advised that the Industry's Collective Agreement has been amended. These amendments were agreed upon at this year's Annual Negotiations and have been published in Regulation No. **R.805** of **Government Gazette No. 26524** of **9 July 2004** which are effective as from **19 July 2004**. The amendments read as follows:

**1. Minimum Weekly Wage Increases and Minimum Weekly Wage Rates – Furniture, Bedding & Upholstery Sector**

**NB:** Notwithstanding that an employee working in the Furniture, Bedding and Upholstery Sector may be receiving a weekly wage, which is in excess of the minimum weekly wage rate for the grade of work performed by him/her, such an employee nevertheless still qualifies for at least a minimum weekly wage increase effective from 19 July 2004, as listed hereunder:-

Grade	Occupation Skills Level Code	Minimum Weekly Wage Increases Applicable as from 19 July 2004	Minimum Weekly Wage Rates Applicable as from 19 July 2004
Unskilled Employee	05	<b>R22-50</b> (An unskilled employee employed in the Industry after 1 July 2001)	<b>R325-00</b>
		<b>R34-00</b> (An unskilled employee employed in the Industry before 1 July 2001)	
Semi-skilled Employee	04	<b>R36-50</b>	<b>R566-00</b>
Skilled Employee	03	<b>R40-00</b>	<b>R610-00</b>
Chargehand	02	<b>R40-00</b>	<b>R660-00</b>
Foreman/Supervisor	01	<b>R40-00</b>	<b>R660-00</b>
Drivers – Subsistence Allowance	N/A	<b>N/A</b>	<b>R35-00 per night</b>

**2a. Curtaining Sector - Grading**

As from 19 July 2004, the Industry's Curtaining Sector's employees are to be graded according to their Occupation Skills levels namely – Unskilled employees, Semi-skilled employees, Skilled employees, Chargehands and Foreman/Supervisors. Depending on the work performed by the employees, they are to be graded in terms of the following:

**Unskilled Employee**

- Cleaning in factory, folding and packing away fabric and remnants.
- Making teas, light lunches, cleaning staff tearooms.
- Pulls up curtain tapes to size and attaches hooks and trims to size.
- Uses an iron, steam-iron or presser and also cleans fabrics.
- Employee who loads and unloads goods.

**Semi-skilled Employee**

- Checks for flaws, calculates cutting sizes, makes tickets and cuts fabric.
- Prepares, covers and decorates pelmets.
- Machines frills, borders, piping, zips, swags and tails.
- Storeman.

- Machines, joins patterned fabric attached tapes, marks and pleats headings.
- Joins and hems plain fabric overlocks and blind stitches plain and patterned fabrics.
- Cuts fabric previously marked, and marks and cuts lining.
- Measures, marks and trims curtains and other items to sizes and shapes.
- Driver of a light delivery vehicle, but does not fit curtains.
- Stitches by hand on any items including pelmets.
- Fits products associated with window treatment under the supervision of a fitter and cuts and covers rails, rods and battons.
- Prepares pelmets under the supervision of a pelmet maker.

#### **Skilled Employee**

- Prepares patterns, marks and cuts swags and tails.
- Fitter of curtains and associated products.

#### **Chargehand**

- Supervises sections of the curtain making process.

#### **Foreman/Supervisor**

- A curtain maker who supervises the entire curtain making process.

### **2b. Minimum Weekly Wage Increases and Minimum Weekly Wage Rates – Curtaining Sector**

**NB:** Notwithstanding that an employee working in the Curtaining Sector may be receiving a weekly wage, which is in excess of the minimum weekly wage rate for the grade of work performed by him/her, such an employee nevertheless still qualifies for at least a minimum weekly wage increase effective from 19 July 2004, as listed hereunder:-

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Occupation Skills Level Code</b>	<b>Minimum Weekly Wage Increases Applicable as from 19 July 2004</b>	<b>Minimum Weekly Wage Rates Applicable as from 19 July 2004</b>
<b>Unskilled Employee</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>R18-00</b>	<b>R325-00</b>
<b>Semi-skilled Employee</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>R30-00</b>	<b>R516-79</b>
<b>Skilled Employee</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>R34-50</b>	<b>R587-30</b>
<b>Chargehand</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>R34-50</b>	<b>R645-25</b>
<b>Foreman/Supervisor</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>R34-50</b>	<b>R645-25</b>
<b>Drivers – Subsistence Allowance</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>R35-00 per night</b>

### **3. Casual Employees**

Casual employees are to be remunerated at an hourly rate of not less than that applicable to the grade of work performed by them, plus 15% for Holiday Fund contributions on the hourly rate paid.

**NB:** A casual employee is defined as an employee who is employed by the same employer for not more than three (3) days in any one (1) month.

### **4. Casual Motor Vehicle Drivers**

Casual motor vehicle drivers are to be remunerated daily for at least nine (9) hours per day, at not less than the hourly rate applicable to semi-skilled employees, plus 15% for Holiday Bonus Fund contributions on the hourly rate paid.

**NB:** A casual motor vehicle driver is defined as an employee who is employed by the same employer for not more than three (3) days in any one (1) month.

### **5. Holiday Bonus Fund**

As from 19 July 2004 the formula to determine Holiday Bonus Fund contributions will be as follows:

The amount payable by the employer shall be calculated on the ordinary hours worked by the employee and on the hours which would have ordinarily have been worked by the employee on paid public holidays and shall be determined as follows:

- 15% of the employee's ordinary weekly wages if the employee has lost 20 minutes or less of the full possible number of normal hours that the employee could have worked in any specific pay week.
- 10% of the employee's ordinary weekly wages if the employee has lost between 21 minutes and 60 minutes of the full possible number of normal hours that the employee could have worked in any specific pay week.

- 5% of the employee's ordinary weekly wages if the employee has lost more than 60 minutes of the full possible number of normal hours that the employee could have worked in any specific pay week.
- 15% of a foreman's specified minimum weekly wage for working employers, irrespective of the hours worked.
- No Holiday Bonus Fund contributions are payable on overtime wages/earnings. Overtime worked during any pay week is to be utilised to make up for any shortfall in ordinary hours of work and overtime will be regarded as that time worked in excess of 44 hours per week or those lesser hours which are normally worked by the establishment.

#### **6. Council Levies**

The Council levies effective from 19 July 2004 amounts to R4-00 per week from both the employer and employee. This amounts to a total Council levy of R8-00 per week.

Council levies are only payable if an employee works more than sixteen (16) hours in any pay week.

#### **7. Study Leave**

Provision has been made in the Industry's Collective Agreement for study leave for employees. This new clause in the Agreement reads as follows:-

Study leave may be granted by employers to permanent and full-time employees only, under the following conditions:-

- Study leave shall be at the employer's discretion which should not be unreasonably withheld by the employer.
- Study leave, if granted by the employer, shall be for a maximum of two (2) subjects per annum.
- Study leave, if granted by the employer, shall be limited to two (2) days of paid study leave per subject. A day on the last working day prior to the date of the exam and a day on the date of the exam.
- The result(s) of the exam(s) must be presented by the employee to the employer as soon as it becomes available.
- If an employee fails a subject, the leave granted to the employee for that subject must be refunded by the employee to the employer at a ratio of one (1) day's wages per failed subject.

#### **8. Annual Closure Dates**

##### **December 2004 and January 2005**

The Annual Closure Dates for December 2004 and January 2005 are from the evening of Wednesday, 15 December 2004 to the morning of Monday, 10 January 2005.

##### **December 2005 and January 2006**

The Annual Closure Dates for December 2005 and January 2006 are from the evening of Thursday, 15 December 2005 to the morning of Wednesday, 11 January 2006.

**All other provisions of the current Collective Agreement remain applicable together with these amendments.**

**Kindly ensure that all the provisions of this Circular are complied with. Any queries in respect of this Circular must be directed to the Council's Inspectorate Department. Please do not contact any junior staff members of the Council with any queries.**

**A COPY OF THIS CIRCULAR MUST BE DISPLAYED ON YOUR ESTABLISHMENT'S NOTICE BOARD**