

Transfer station attendant Job Description

A free job description template for the Waste management industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This transfer station attendant job description template reflects Australian workplace standards and waste industry practice at the time of publication. It is a general guide only and does not constitute legal advice. Confirm the applicable classification, licence requirements and pay rate against the Waste Management Award 2020 (MA000043) and the actual duties of the role before advertising. For complex coverage questions, seek independent legal or HR advice.

1. Position overview

A transfer station attendant runs the customer-facing side of a tipping facility. They direct arriving vehicles to the right bay, check what is being unloaded, keep the tipping area clear, and pull out material that can be recovered rather than buried.

The safety element is significant: the public reverse trailers next to open pits, carry loads they are not equipped for, and bring items the site cannot accept. Under the Waste Management Award the role sits at Level 2, which covers waste facility attendants.

2. Key responsibilities

Direct customers to the correct bay

Assess each load on arrival and send the vehicle to the right tipping face or stream.

Supervise unloading safely

Keep members of the public a safe distance from plant, pits and edges while they unload.

Segregate waste streams

Ensure recyclable, green, e-waste and hazardous material go to the correct area rather than into general waste.

Recover reusable material

Identify items suitable for the reuse shop or resource recovery rather than disposal.

Keep the tipping area clear

Sweep, push back and tidy so the working face stays safe and usable through the day.

Refuse or escalate prohibited material

Identify asbestos, chemicals and other material the site is not licensed to accept, and escalate before it is unloaded.

3. Skills and attributes

- Public interaction: Gives clear direction to members of the public who have never used the site before.
- Load assessment: Recognises at a glance what a load contains and where it belongs.
- Safety leadership: Willing to stop an unsafe unload, including when the customer is impatient.
- Physical fitness: Sustains manual work outdoors across a full shift.
- Recovery mindset: Actively looks for material that can be diverted from landfill.
- Clear communication: Explains site rules and charges without escalating the interaction.

4. Qualifications and requirements

Requirements for transfer station attendant positions vary by operator and vehicle class. These are the credentials Australian waste employers ask for most often.

- No formal qualification required — Not required. Attendants are trained on the job in site procedures and stream identification.
- Site induction and stream training — Provided. Covers what the site accepts, where each stream goes and what must be refused.
- Class C driver licence — Commonly required. Needed to reach most facility sites.
- Asbestos awareness — Desirable. Valuable for recognising material the site cannot accept.
- First aid certificate — Desirable. Useful at sites open to the public.
- Certificate II in Waste Management — Desirable. Supports progression to plant operating or supervision.

5. Working conditions

- Outdoor work at a tipping face in all weather
- Sustained contact with members of the public, including difficult interactions
- Exposure to odour, dust and noise, with PPE provided
- Work near open pits, moving plant and reversing vehicles
- Weekend and public holiday work — sites are busiest when the public is off work
- Physically demanding, with regular manual handling

6. Award information

Waste Management Award 2020 (MA000043)

Most transfer station attendant positions in Australia are covered by the Waste Management Award 2020 (MA000043). This role generally sits at Level 2, which pays \$1,168.48 a week or \$30.75 an hour for full-time and part-time employees, and \$38.44 an hour for casuals, from 1 July 2026. See the full Waste Management Award pay guide for every classification, penalty rate and allowance.

The rates include the industry allowance

Fair Work publishes these rates with the \$3.24 per hour industry allowance already included, because clause 16.2(b) makes it an all-purpose allowance — payable for all purposes including overtime and shift rates. Rate sites that strip it out quote a Level 1 rate around \$26.63 instead of \$30.11, and every penalty calculated from that lower base is understated.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a transfer station attendant do?

A transfer station attendant directs arriving vehicles to the correct tipping bay, supervises unloading safely, segregates waste streams, recovers reusable material and keeps the tipping area clear. They also refuse or escalate material the site is not licensed to accept.

Q: Is a transfer station attendant a customer service role?

Largely, yes. Most customers are members of the public using the site infrequently, so the attendant explains the rules, the charges and where to go — often while managing a queue and keeping people away from open pits.

Q: What award level is a transfer station attendant?

Level 2 under the Waste Management Award, which explicitly covers waste facility attendants alongside labourers, depot hands and process workers.

Q: Do transfer station attendants work weekends?

Usually. Public tipping facilities are busiest at weekends and on public holidays, so weekend rostering is normal and attracts the award penalty rates for those days.

Pay and award

Q: How much does a transfer station attendant earn in Australia?

Under the Waste Management Award 2020, a transfer station attendant at Level 2 earns a minimum of \$1,168.48 a week or \$30.75 an hour as a full-time or part-time employee, and \$38.44 an hour as a casual, from 1 July 2026. These are legal minimums — many operators pay above them, and penalties apply for weekend, shift and overtime work.

Q: Do early starts attract a penalty rate?

Not inside the ordinary-hours span. The award opens ordinary hours at 4.00am, so a pre-dawn start is ordinary time at 100%. Paying a penalty for every early start is the most common overpayment in waste payroll. See the award guide for the full span.

Q: What are the weekend and public holiday rates?

Saturday is 150% for the first two hours then 200%, Sunday is 200%, and a public holiday is 250% — with Good Friday and Christmas Day higher again at 300%. Casual rates add 25 percentage points to each, except overtime, which adds 10.

Q: What is the minimum shift length?

Four hours. Casual employees have a minimum daily engagement of 4 hours and part-time employees must be paid a minimum of 4 hours for each day worked.

Hiring and rostering

Q: How do I write a transfer station attendant job ad?

Start from this template, then add the specific vehicle class, site and start time. Candidates for waste roles self-select strongly on start time and equipment, so being vague costs you good applicants. Our guide to writing a job description covers the structure.

Q: How do I keep licences current across a crew?

Store each licence and endorsement against the employee with its expiry date and get warned in advance — see licence and certification management. Rostering someone onto a task they are no longer certified for is the employer's exposure.

Q: How do I roster around early starts fairly?

Publish rosters with enough notice, rotate the earliest starts across the crew, and track actual versus rostered hours so the load is visible. Our guide to rostering waste collection staff walks through it.

Q: Can RosterElf track depot clock-ins?

Yes. GPS geofences around each depot or transfer station record where and when a shift actually started against what was rostered — the comparison an early-start or overtime question turns on months later.