

Employment Law Factsheet 2024 – Updated

April 2024 brings many changes to employment law, which employers must stay up to date on.

With so many important changes in the offing, The HR Dept has produced an updated factsheet, detailing the key issues employers need to ensure they are aware of.

Some changes were announced previously, with more added following the Chancellor's Spring Budget on 6th March 2024. Check out the imminent and upcoming changes below.

Changes to pay

1. In his Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced a further cut to Employee National Insurance. Having been reduced from 12% to 10% in January, as of 6th April it will stand at 8%.
2. As of 1st April, the National Living Wage will be extended to include 21 and 22-year-olds, as well as increasing in line with the Low Pay Commission's recommendations:
 - a. 21-year-olds and over – £11.44 (**increase of £1.02**)
 - b. 18- to 20-year-olds – £8.60 (**increase of £1.11**)
 - c. 16- to 17-year-olds and apprentices – £6.40 (**increase of £1.12**).
3. As on 5th April, Statutory Sick Pay will increase to £116.75 per week (**increase of £7.35**).
4. From 7th April 2024, Family-related (Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental, Adoption and Parental Bereavement) statutory pay will increase to £184.03 (**increase of £11.55**).

Changes coming in to force in April 2024

Holiday Pay – Employers may pay irregular hour workers for their accrued holiday entitlement in each pay period based on 12.07% of their pay. It should be itemised separately on their pay slip.

Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 – This extends the rights of employees to request flexible working from the provisions already in place. Employees will have a day one right to make a request (rather than after six months of employment) and be able to make two requests a year (instead of one). Employers will have the right to decline the request for a valid business reason but will have less time to give the response – two months instead of three. The need for employees to explain the effect of the proposed change or how that should be dealt with has also been removed. This will come into force on 6 April 2024.

Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024 – Changes to paternity leave will allow new fathers to split their two-week entitlement into separate one-week blocks, which they can take any time in the first year after the birth or adoption of their child. Additionally, the 15-week notice they must currently give has been reduced to 28 days.

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Changes coming in to force in April 2024 (cont.)

Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023 – This new law adds to the Employment Rights Act 1996, and will further protect women from the start of their pregnancy, as well as those returning from maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave. Failure to offer suitable employment in a redundancy situation, if it is available, will result in an automatic unfair dismissal. The term is 18 months, beginning on the first day of the expected week of childbirth (EWC).

Carer's Leave Act 2023 – A new day one right is being introduced, permitting employees to request one week of unpaid leave a year to care for a dependant with a long-term care need. Employers can postpone the time if the operation of the business would be severely affected. Employers must explain this in writing giving notice before the leave was due to begin and allow the employee to take it within a month.

Increase in Tribunal Compensation Limits – The Government has announced the annual increase in compensation limits for employment tribunal awards and other statutory payments. From April, the maximum compensatory award for unfair dismissal is £115,115, up from £105,707. The minimum basic award for some forms of unfair dismissal also rises, from £7,836 to £8,533.

Changes expected later this year

Employment (Allocation of Tips) Act 2024 – (July, 2024) It is expected that this act will come into force affecting hospitality businesses, hairdressers and personal service companies, requiring that 100% of tips are paid to staff before the end of the month in which the tips were made. This includes tips made by bank card. It will also be necessary for employers to have a written tip distribution policy. A statutory code of practice is currently being drafted.

TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings) Consultations – (July, 2024) This change stops the need to elect representatives for collective consultation for businesses with fewer than 50 people and transfers affecting less than 10 employees, allowing businesses to consult directly with the affected employees. It is expected to come into force in July 2024.

The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 – (October, 2024) This amendment of the Equality Act will come into force, placing a greater duty placed upon employers to take a proactive approach to demonstrate that they have taken steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

Workers (Predictable Terms and Conditions) Act 2023 – (October, 2024) This Act gives workers – including agency workers – the statutory right to ask for a more predictable working pattern, after six months of service. This must be dealt with all requests in a reasonable manner by employers.

Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 – (expected 2025) Employees will have a day-one right to take up to 12 weeks' leave, where a child who is 28 days old or younger is admitted to hospital for care for a continuous period of seven days or more. Employees may be entitled to neonatal care pay.

The HR Dept provides employers with everything they need to manage these changes. Our national network of local experts provides a local and personal approach to all things HR and Employment Law.

Our flexible, tailored support allows us to understand your business and understand you. Whether you need ah-hoc assistance or day-to-day support, we have a range of services available to suit your needs and secure your business.

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