

## Employment Tribunal Claims Continue to Grow

**The latest Ministry of Justice statistics, covering April to June 2018, show that the number of employment tribunal claims continues to increase both on a quarterly and annual basis. Here we take a closer look at the figures:**

- The number of single claims rose by 165% when compared to the same quarter in 2017, when fees were payable.
- Compared to the previous quarter (January to March 2018) claims have increased by 23%.
- Unfair dismissal claims have risen by 23% since the same quarter in 2017.
- There was a 120% increase in claims of sexual orientation discrimination.
- The most common claim heard during the reporting period was unauthorised wage deductions.
- The highest compensation award was over £242,130 in disability discrimination claim.
- Average unfair dismissal award was over £15,000.
- 74% of claimants were represented by a lawyer, highlighting the need for employers to have their own expert representation to be able to properly defend themselves.

### Morrisons face equal pay claim worth up to £1bn

Morrisons have become the latest employer to face an equal pay claim. This means all of the 'Big 4' supermarket chains, including Asda, Sainsburys and Tesco, are facing claims from shop workers in predominately female roles who feel they are unfairly paid when compared to distribution centre staff, who are mostly male.

#### Did you know?

This case is very similar to the long running Asda case. In that case, the store staff have been allowed to use the distribution staff as a comparator: something which Asda tried hard to contest. This is likely to pave the way for the Morrisons claim.

### Parental Bereavement Bill gets final approval

The Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act has now received royal assent and is expected to come into force in 2020. This new law will give working parents a day one right to two weeks of paid bereavement leave if they have a child under the age of 18 who dies.

#### Did you know?

There is currently no legal requirement to offer staff paid time off for bereavement. Employers may choose to offer paid leave, however this is completely discretionary. The new law means that employers will need to review their policies ahead of 2020 to ensure they offer at least the legal minimum leave and pay.

### Prince William launches new mental health website

Prince William has helped to launch a new website called 'Mental Health at Work' which aims to raise awareness of mental health issues and improve employee wellbeing. This shows the increasing role employers must play in maintaining the mental health of their staff

#### Did you know?

Mental Health issues cost UK employers up to £44billion in absences and lost productivity in 2017. Taking a positive approach towards mental health at work will help employers to retain staff and plays a large role in ensuring morale and productivity remains high.

The latest tribunal statistics shows that the number of claims is still on the up; the removal of fees continues to have a growing impact. Employers need to ensure their dismissal procedures are robust enough to withstand challenge. If you would like help when dismissing someone, please speak with our 24 hour Advisory Service.

Please contact the 24 Hour Advice Service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.