



This Week in Employment Law

New Rates for Sick Pay & Family Friendly Leave

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have proposed increases to a number of statutory payments, which if approved, will come into effect in April 2019. To ensure compliance, employers should familiarise themselves with these proposals, which are explained in more detail below:

- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is set to increase from £92.05 to £94.25 per week from 6th April 2019.
- Statutory Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Pay are also set to increase from £145.18 to £148.68 per week. These will be effective from the first Sunday in April, i.e. 7th April 2019.
- The average an employee has to earn to be eligible to receive these payments will increase from £116 to £118 per week.
- Although these are currently just proposals, recent history suggests that the government are unlikely to amend these recommendations.
- In anticipation of this, employers should review their existing practices and be prepared to amend any policies to comply with these new rates once they are officially approved.

Employers urged to reveal number of disabled staff

A new government framework has encouraged large employers to take an 'honest look' at how many disabled people they employ. The framework asks firms with at least 250 staff to voluntarily report how many of these have a health condition, or disability, and how they accommodate for this at work.

Did you know?

Although voluntary, this requirement could potentially become mandatory in the future. In the meantime you should consider how accessible your workplace is for disabled staff and what reasonable adjustments you could make to better accommodate them.

Vegan employee makes discrimination claim

An employee who identifies as an 'ethical vegan' is bringing a discrimination claim against his former employer, arguing that he was dismissed on account of his 'beliefs'. The case, set for March 2019, could set a precedent for whether veganism is protected as a philosophical belief.

Did you know?

The employment tribunal will rule whether veganism qualifies as a legitimate belief under the Equality Act 2010. Depending on the result, you may need to amend existing business practices to ensure you do not discriminate against vegans at work.

Ted Baker staff petition to ban 'forced' hugging

Staff working for Ted Baker have launched a petition to bring an end to the practice of 'forced' hugging that exists within the organisation. Over 2,000 staff have signed this petition opposing the practice as well as asking for a changes to a workplace culture which they feel leaves harassment unchallenged.

Did you know?

Staff may perceive certain gestures or greetings as harassment, even if they were well intended. Therefore you should conduct training on inappropriate workplace behaviour and treat any reported incidents seriously to avoid creating a damaging workplace culture.

It is important to comply with the planned increases in statutory pay rates to avoid employee grievances. To make sure you get the right information, as well as advice on how to prepare for these new rates, get in touch with us using 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.