

## EU Settlement Scheme in Public Test Phase

**The EU Settlement Scheme was officially moved to public test phase on Monday 21st January 2019, meaning more EU nationals living and working in the UK can now apply for the right to remain indefinitely post-Brexit. Supporting staff with applications when the scheme is fully rolled out in March 2019 could help retain valuable workers and employers may want to consider offering support to their staff:**

- **Provide information** - Issue staff with a document detailing the key features of the Settlement Scheme, how to apply and what information they will need to provide.
- **Help with translation** - Assist staff whose first language is not English if they need help with translation by taking time to personally explain certain terms, reducing the risk of errors in applications.
- **Offer business resources** - Offer the use of company computers where possible if your employee doesn't have access to a computer or compatible mobile phone.
- **Assign help** - Designate a member of staff who can help employees if they aren't confident with using technology to make their application.

Following a recent announcement, those applying to the Scheme from 30th March 2019 will not have to pay an application fee. Any fees paid before this date will be reimbursed by the Government.

### Supreme Court to assess use of restricted covenants

The Supreme Court will decide whether it was unreasonable for an employer to include terms in a restrictive covenant preventing a former employee from being 'concerned or interested' in any business carried out by a competitor as this would bar her right to become a shareholder.

#### Did you know?

Terms included in a restrictive covenant are only enforceable when they are reasonable. Employers who include general or vague terms in a restrictive covenant may find that they are not able to rely on those terms when the employee leaves because they are not deemed to be reasonable.

### Council Workers to share £500m equal pay settlement

Hundreds of female workers will share £500m in back pay after Glasgow Council agreed to settle a 12 year equal pay dispute. Two separate courts had ruled that the Council's decision to pay workers in female dominated roles less than similar male dominated roles was discriminatory.

#### Did you know?

Equal pay disputes do not always have to involve staff working in exactly the same roles, but rather where staff work in roles with similar responsibilities. Asda, Tesco, Morrisons and Sainsbury's are in the midst of similar claims which, if lost, could result in costly payouts for staff.

### SMEs will not be required to reveal their gender pay gap

The government has rejected proposals from the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Committee to require firms with between 50-249 employees to produce a gender pay gap report, saying that this requirement would be burdensome for those with fewer resources.

#### Did you know?

The current requirements mean that organisations with 250 or more employees must publish their gender pay gap figures each year. For these purposes, 'employee' also includes those with 'worker' status and also some self-employed individuals.

Whilst it may appear to be something of a buzz word, a failure to manage staff appropriately on Blue Monday can have a detrimental impact on morale and productivity. For further assistance with combating Blue Monday, and keeping staff happy and motivated throughout January, give us a call 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.