

## *This Week in Employment Law*

### Preparing ahead of Global Climate Strike

**The Global Climate Strike, scheduled for Friday 20th September 2019, calls for employees across the world to take part in a 'strike' to demand action on climate change. Ahead of this, we look at what this might mean for employers:**

- Despite being referred to as a 'strike', staff who skip work to take part in the protest will not be afforded the same protections as those involved in lawful industrial action.
- To be 'lawful', a strike must meet statutory requirements, including the existence of a trade dispute, a ballot and a written notice.
- Therefore, employers will be free to recognise absences relating to the Global Climate Strike as unauthorised.
- Employers may wish to be proactive and remind staff of their duty to attend work on the day, unless they have booked annual leave.
- Employers with a strong corporate social responsibility policy may wish to offer a compromise to their staff.
- Arranging conservation themed activities at work, such as charitable dress down days, may be an agreeable alternative to demonstrate a company's commitment to the cause and ensure operations are maintained.

#### More than 1 million workers miss out on holiday pay

The latest study by the Resolution Foundation has suggested that many employers are failing to understand the entitlements around paid annual leave, as more than 1 million workers in Britain do not receive any of the holiday pay they are guaranteed by law.

##### **Did you know?**

Employees and workers are entitled to a minimum of 5.6 weeks' paid annual leave each year. This works out to 28 days for those who work 5 days a week. Failing to provide paid leave is unlawful and can lead to costly tribunal proceedings, therefore it is important that employers allow staff to take their full allocation.

#### Labour promise overhaul of employment rights

Speaking as part of the Trade Union Congress conference in Brighton, Jeremy Corbyn promised that a Labour government would introduce substantial changes to employment law, including a £10 minimum wage and a ban on zero-hour contracts.

##### **Did you know?**

Due to the government's Good Work Plan, major changes to employment law are scheduled to be introduced in April 2020. Zero hours staff are set to receive more stability with proposals for an entitlement to compensation for cancelled shifts.

#### Tribunal dismisses claim for 'vegetarian discrimination'

A Norwich employment tribunal (ET) has dismissed the claim of a former hotel employee who believed he suffered discrimination for being vegetarian. The ET stated that vegetarianism did not qualify as a philosophical belief under the Equality Act 2010.

##### **Did you know?**

To qualify as a philosophical belief, a belief has to meet a number of requirements, including being genuinely held and not an opinion or a viewpoint. Employers are likely to be relieved at the outcome of this case, however, other similar areas such as veganism are yet to be tested.

The planned 'Global Climate Strike' may cause disruptions for a number of businesses and it is important that employers know how to respond in this situation. Thankfully, employers will be in a strong position to deal with any unauthorised absences. For more information on this, give Croner a call using our expert 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.