

## New minimum wage rates set for April 2020

**As announced on 30th December 2019, the current minimum wage rates will change in April 2020 representing an increase of as much as 6.5% for many existing minimum wage employees. Below are the key increases that employers need to know:**

- Minimum pay rates for workers aged 25 and over will increase from £8.21 to £8.72 per hour. This represents a hourly increase of 6.2% for those who are eligible for the 'Living Wage'.
- The rate for those aged 21-24 will increase from £7.70 an hour to £8.20 per hour, an improvement of 6.5%.
- Those aged 18-20 will see their minimum pay increase by 4.9% from £6.15 to £6.45 an hour.
- 16-17 year olds will benefit from a new minimum hourly rate set at £4.55, which represents a 4.6% increase on their previous rate of £4.35.
- The apprentice rate will also increase by 6.4%, rising from £3.90 to £4.15 per hour. However, this rate will still only apply to those under 19 years of age, or over 19 but in the first year of their apprenticeship.
- The government have declared these changes to represent the 'biggest cash increase ever', with estimates suggesting a full time minimum wage employee could receive as much as £930 a year extra as a result.

### UK voters 'support ban' on zero-hours work

Research conducted by the Trade Union Congress (TUC) has revealed that two-thirds of UK voters would support a ban on zero-hours contracts, which may create a difficult situation for many employers who see this flexibility as integral to their business operations.

#### Did you know?

The Conservatives did not campaign to ban zero-hour contracts in the latest election, however they have promised to allow gig-economy workers to be able to request a more stable contract. Therefore, it will be interesting to see whether their approach towards improving workers' rights changes in the future.

### NHS whistleblower wins £127k compensation

A nurse who was unfairly dismissed from their role at Broomfield Hospital for raising issues about bullying and working conditions has been awarded £127k after the employment tribunal ruled that he ought to have been protected under whistleblowing law.

#### Did you know?

To qualify for whistleblower protection individuals must meet a number of criteria, including raising an issue that is genuinely held and in the public interest. Qualifying individuals will have the right to claim automatic unfair dismissal without the need for 2 years' service.

### Oxford professor wins age discrimination case

Oxford University's Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) policy has been deemed discriminatory by an employment tribunal after a 69 year-old professor brought a claim of age discrimination when his contract was not renewed by the institution.

#### Did you know?

This is not the first time the University's EJRA policy has been called into question, with a different tribunal case in May 2019 actually finding that it was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate business aim. Therefore, it will be interesting to see if the most recent decision is appealed further.

The forthcoming changes to minimum wage rates are likely to create a host of questions and debate for minimum wage employers wondering how to adapt to these new requirements. Thankfully, those looking for assistance can rely on our expert Advisory Service who are here to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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