

14-day quarantine for UK arrivals

From Monday 8 June 2020, most individuals coming to the UK need to self-isolate for 14 days to help prevent further spread of coronavirus. We explore what this means for employers below:

- Generally, all arrivals to the UK, including UK nationals and those who live in the UK, need to follow these new rules.
- However, those travelling from the Common Travel Area (Ireland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands) are exempt.
- There are also exempted job categories, including those in road haulage, healthcare and emergency work which apply when someone arrives in the UK for work.
- Employers may need to provide staff with written confirmation that they fall into an exempted category.
- Employers should also be mindful that employees may want to take overseas holidays over the next few months, potentially meaning an extra two weeks' absence from work.
- Employers could ask staff to work from home or explore whether the additional time can be taken as annual leave.
- Employers may also prevent leave being taken, or cancel periods of pre-booked leave, however, individual circumstances of the employee in question should be considered before doing so.
- Up to four weeks of leave which cannot normally be carried over can now be carried over into the next two leave years if certain conditions are met.

Sunday trading laws could be lifted for a year

Legally, shops with retail space of over 280m² are limited to a maximum of 6 hours' trade on Sundays. The Government is now considering allowing retailers to open for longer on Sundays in a bid to encourage post-pandemic economic growth. Trade unions have criticised this proposal.

Did you know?

Employees who work in retail, including supermarkets, have a legal right to opt out of working on Sundays. However, they must usually provide their employers with at least three months notice, in writing, of their opt out decision. Those employed to work only on Sundays cannot opt out.

BP makes plans for global job cuts due to lack of demand

Plans are underway for the oil and gas giant, BP, to cut 15% of its global workforce as a result of a lack of demand for oil during the coronavirus pandemic – a process set to last for 45 days. Last month, it reported a loss for the first three months of the year, and up to 10,000 redundancies are proposed.

Did you know?

Other than redundancy, employers can consider other options that ensure the retention of their workforce and offer job security, such as: freezing recruitment, pay rise cuts, and removing overtime work. Employers could also benefit from implementing redeployment plans from a quieter areas to other parts of the business.

Local authority circumvent redundancy rules

The Employment Appeal Tribunal has ruled that a local authority, by dismissing staff due to a school closure and telling them to unsuccessfully apply for their roles again, tried to circumvent collective redundancy procedure as no consultation was held during the process and the claimants could not challenge the decision.

Did you know?

When implementing a redundancy procedure, organisations need to ensure that it is done fairly. Also, if it is proposed that more than 19 employees are to be made redundant, employers must consult with employee or trade union representatives and comply with further collective consultation rules.

The government is currently working to make safer travel agreements with other countries, which may remove the need for self-isolation in the future. Our 24-hour Advisory Service is on hand to provide up-to-date guidance on quarantine rules and how you should respond when staff travel abroad.

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