

Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

Monday 10 May 2021 marks the start of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week. We explore what employers should know below:

- Employers are encouraged to consider ways to ensure that positive mental health remains an intrinsic part of their workplace, especially as they have a duty of care to support their employees' health, safety, and wellbeing.
- According to Acas, there are many types of mental health issues that people may suffer from, however the most common are stress, depression, and anxiety.
- Less common mental health issues include bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.
- Acas suggests that employers should engage in conversation and work with their employees to find the right solutions for them.
- Employers can also implement a designated mental health policy and train line managers on handling the situation.
- By confirming their commitment in writing, through the implementation of a policy, employers will be able to reduce any stigma around the matter and help place mental health on an equal footing with physical health at work.
- Policies should outline who staff can disclose any mental health issues to, as well as the company's stance on introducing mental health adjustments where necessary.
- This will work towards ensuring that staff feel more comfortable about disclosing issues regarding their mental health.

Further furlough fraud arrests made

A man and woman from West Yorkshire were arrested on 28 April 2021 on suspicion of fraud under the Job Retention Scheme. Although the pair have since been released, HMRC's Taxpayer Protection Taskforce continue their investigation. If they are found to have deliberately concealed overpayment, they face a penalty of up to 100% of the grant amount they were not entitled to.

Did you know?

The number of employers making claims under the Job Retention Scheme declined by 12,000 in February, according to HMRC. There is a little over four months left until the scheme ends, with it set to draw to a close on 30 September 2021.

Travel traffic light system makes a comeback

After months of international travel bans in England due to coronavirus lockdown measures, it has now been confirmed that travel can return from 17 May 2021. However, travellers will have to follow a traffic light system which carry different rules on testing and isolation on return to England. Countries will be placed in either a red, amber, or green list with updates made every three weeks.

Did you know?

This will likely mean that staff will want to make more annual leave requests now for the summer. It is therefore advisable that employers implement annual leave policies to ensure that the process of managing leave requests is organised and thorough.

Pay for shared leave not discrimination, rules EAT

The Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) has held that a man on shared parental leave (SPL) who was paid less than a woman on adoption leave (AL) was not discriminated against based on his sex. The claimant argued that the purpose of both forms of leave was to facilitate childcare, but the EAT found that that the purposes of AL went beyond this and was materially different to the position of SPL.

Did you know?

Direct sex discrimination occurs where a person is treated, or would be treated, less favourably 'because of' their sex compared with others in like-for-like circumstances.

Mental health issues can vary from person to person and it is important that employers deal with it on a case by case basis. Contact our 24-hour Advisory Service for up-to-date guidance on this and more.

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