

New sick pay and maternity pay rates announced

The proposed rates for sick pay, maternity pay and other key pay elements to take effect from April 2022 have been announced. Below, we set out what employers need to know:

- The 2022 pay picture is becoming much clearer with this recent announcement; we already know the national minimum/living wage rates and real living wage rates to take effect next year.
- From April 2022, statutory sick pay is set to increase from £96.35 to £99.35 per week.
- Also in April 2022, statutory maternity pay is set to increase from £151.97 to £156.66 per week. This increase will also apply to the rates of statutory paternity, adoption, shared parental and parental bereavement pay.
- The lower earnings limit, which is the minimum amount workers must earn in order to be eligible to receive these statutory rates, is set to increase to from £120 to £123 per week; this represents the first increase to this rate for two years.
- Exact dates of implementation are yet to be confirmed, and it is worth noting that they do not all usually increase on the same date as each other.
- Employers who have employees on sickness absence, or maternity leave etc, in the run up to April 2022, must remember to factor in the increases for these employees where their absence continues past the rate change, as well as employees who go on sick leave, maternity leave etc after the new rates are in place.

Covid measures return in response to new variant

Some Covid measures in the UK have been reinstated in response to the identification of the new Omicron variant. The 'red list' countries has been re-established meaning arrivals from certain countries must quarantine; close contacts with a suspected Omicron case must isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccine status and face coverings are compulsory in shops and on public transport.

Did you know?

The Prime Minister did not go so far as to amend current guidance on homeworking in England: there is no instruction to work from home. Employees in Scotland and Wales are encouraged to work from home where possible.

Gender Pay Gap reports to return to normal for 2022?

As part of the Government's response to Covid-19, the normal rules on gender pay gap reporting were relaxed. There was no requirement to report in 2020 and employers were given an extended deadline in 2021 to report their figures. Reports were required by October 2021 for both public and private sector, rather than April 2021 for the private sector and March 2021 for the public sector.

Did you know?

There is no indication so far that the relaxed rules will extend into 2022. This would mean figures taken on the snapshot date in April 2021 (March 2021 for public sector) need to be reported on by April 2022 (March 2022 for public sector).

Paranoid delusions did not amount to disability: CA

The Court of Appeal has upheld a previous decision that an employee who suffered two paranoid delusions in 2013 and 2017 was not disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. The delusions had a substantial adverse effect on his ability to carry out day to day activities for 5 months in 2013 and 2 months in 2017. This was not considered to be a 'long term' impairment.

Did you know?

A disability, under the Equality Act 2010, is a physical or mental impairment which, amongst other things, has a long term effect. The Court of Appeal felt that, in this case, that particular criterion was not met.

Receipt of statutory pay rates depends on several criteria in addition to minimum earnings. Contact our 24-hour Advisory Service for up-to-date guidance on who is entitled to statutory maternity pay and statutory sick pay, and Covid-19 may have affected normal rules.

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