

Time to get ready for August bank holiday

With the late summer bank holiday fast approaching on Monday 29 August 2022, we look at what employers need to know.

- Employees often think they have an automatic right to time off work on a bank holiday, however this is not the case. There is no statutory entitlement for employees to not work bank holidays, but this is instead determined by their contract of employment.
- The employer's policy on this will usually depend on the nature of their business and operational needs.
- Employers should check their specific contractual wording carefully to ascertain the position on time off for bank holidays.
- Employers are not required to pay an enhanced rate for bank holiday working, although some may want to consider offering this to help keep staff motivated.
- Employers should remind employees that Monday 29 August 2022 is a bank holiday and confirm if their employees are required to work. Setting out the arrangements for this beforehand can help those working to feel prepared and confident, as well as helping to maintain productivity and service delivery.
- Important information to communicate in advance could include telling staff which colleagues are working, how to contact them if they need help, which manager is on duty to escalate any concerns to and confirming availability of IT support.
- On the day itself offering incentives such as snacks or sweet treats or relaxing your dress code can help to keep staff focused and morale high.

New skills passport for care workers

The government has announced plans to introduce a new care certificate qualification by April 2023 to help with the staffing crisis in this sector. This will allow care workers to change roles and organisations without having to repeat key training. By making it easier for workers to show their skills and qualifications to prospective employers, it's hoped this will help retain care staff within the industry and make the recruitment process easier.

Did you know?

The government also intends to implement a digital hub and skills passport which will act as a voluntary register of staff, with verified records of their skills and qualifications.

Progress check on 4-day week pilot

The biggest ever 4-day week pilot started in June with more than 3,000 workers representing over 30 sectors receiving 100% pay for 80% working time. Two months in most of the organisations involved have reported a happier and more motivated and productive workforce. However, other participants have said that they may not continue with the policy after the end of the trial in December 2022.

Did you know?

The policy is unlikely to suit all businesses. Some have faced challenges due to clients and staff having a different working pattern. The uncertain future of the trial has also affected recruitment.

Footwear comments ended in constructive dismissal

A New Look worker had to wear comfortable shoes to work to help deal with a knee condition but felt bullied by her manager for doing so. The manager said she should be wearing more fashionable brands of trainers. The manager told her off in public in the shop, making comments such as "not to come in again wearing those horrid orange things." She was awarded over £12,000 by the tribunal.

Did you know?

The tribunal found that the manager's conduct breached the implied term of trust and confidence and that there was no reasonable cause for the discussion, or for it to take place in a public area.

Any annual leave requests from employees who are required to work on bank holiday Monday should be considered in line with your usual annual leave policy. 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.