

## New Prime Minister considering review of working time rules

**Following the announcement on Monday that Liz Truss will succeed Boris Johnson as our new Prime Minister, we look at the reforms to key workers' rights that could be on the agenda.**

- Reports suggest that Liz Truss is considering a radical overhaul of workers' rights including the 48-hour working week to "make the UK more competitive" but this is likely to see immediate challenges from unions.
- As it stands, staff can't legally work more than 48 hours each week, although workers can choose to opt out of this agreement if they want to work more.
- Changes could also be made to other working time rules relating to rest breaks and calculation of holiday pay and leave. Currently, all workers are entitled to 5.6 weeks' annual leave per year.
- In July, Liz Truss said if she became Prime Minister she would review all remaining EU law by the end of 2023 in a "red tape bonfire". If this becomes a reality, there could be significant changes to UK employment law.
- However, it's important to bear in mind that these reports are unconfirmed. These changes would likely face pushback, so it's not a given they will come into effect.
- If employment law changes do come into force, employers may need to review their policies, communicate the changes to their staff, and update their contracts.

### Third council offers paid miscarriage leave

Glasgow City Council has become the third council in the UK to offer paid leave to employees who have a miscarriage. Employees who miscarry and their partners will be entitled to two weeks' paid leave. The Council said this is to give staff time to grieve and recover without having to rely on annual leave, sick pay or unpaid leave. The policy extends parental bereavement leave to staff experiencing a loss before 24 weeks.

#### Did you know?

Glasgow City Council is the latest to sign the Miscarriage Association's Workplace Pregnancy Loss Pledge, demonstrating their commitment to supporting employees following a miscarriage.

### Employers to offer free meals to staff during work

Between 3 October 2022 and 6 January 2023, John Lewis and Waitrose will provide free food to staff, to help ease the cost of living. A worker on a 4-hour shift will get one meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner – subject to the time of day) and a worker on an 8-hour shift can choose two meals. The food will be delivered in different ways depending on the workplace. Long distance lorry drivers will be able to pre-order packed lunches.

#### Did you know?

Employers who want to introduce similar measures should ensure there are options to suit different diets (e.g. halal, vegan etc), to avoid claims of indirect discrimination.

### Employee to repay salary following CV fraud

A job applicant has been ordered to pay back earnings after falsely claiming he had university degrees as well as relevant work experience to gain a CEO role and positions as Chair of two NHS trusts. The Supreme Court decided that he should repay the difference between the higher earnings obtained through fraud and the lower earnings he would have received; this amounted to almost £97,000.

#### Did you know?

The organisations eventually uncovered that he did not have these qualifications so pursued claims of fraud. The case highlights the importance of completing thorough pre-employment checks.

Workers are protected from being subjected to a detriment by their employer if they refuse to work longer than the legal limits on working time. 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.