

New Government Dress Code Guidance

The Government and Equalities Office has released long awaited guidance which offers employers a series of best practice recommendations on the topic of dress codes. It comes as a consequence of a petition against sexist dress codes begun by a woman who was sent home from work for not wearing high heels. Here are some key points to be aware of to keep you risk free:

- Although requirements for men and women don't have to be identical, the standards imposed must be equivalent;
- Dress codes must not be a source of harassment by colleagues or customers, for example, women should not be expected to dress in a provocative manner;
- It is best to avoid gender specific requirements altogether, such as asking women to wear high heels or have manicured nails, as this is likely to be unlawful;
- Consider the reasoning behind dress codes: it is best practice for employers to have a legitimate business aim which may be called upon if the code is questioned;
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments should be made to a dress code if the impact of it is more onerous on a disabled employee.

New guidance on religion and belief discrimination

Acas has released new practical guidance for employers on preventing religion and belief discrimination in the workplace.

Did you know?

Religion and belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Employers need to be especially conscious of indirect discrimination which occurs when an apparently neutral rule that applies to everyone can have a disproportionate impact on a group who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can often catch employers out because they believe that no discrimination can occur when they treat everyone the same.

GDPR implementation is almost here

Employers should take the necessary steps in advance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which comes into force on 25 May 2018.

Did you know?

The new law on data protection places transparency of an employer's data practices at the fore. Employers should use a privacy notice to explain to employees exactly what data is used, what it is used for and what the lawful basis for using it is. This document is key in a data protection compliance system and should be used alongside other data protection policies, including one which informs employees of their rights.

Teacher wins "18 rated film" discrimination case

A disabled teacher won £646,000 after his employer failed to make reasonable adjustments for his cystic fibrosis. It had to consider the causal link between his actions and his disability.

Did you know?

The teacher was dismissed when he showed an 18 classified film to children under 18. He said he did it because of the stress he was under which arose from the effect of his disability when significant demands had been placed on him. His actions were, therefore, a result of his disability and so he was found to have been discriminated against.

For advice on how to avoid discrimination in your workplace, call one of our employment law advisers. They are there for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They can guide you through the intricacies of indirect discrimination, including helping identify where your apparently neutral rules may run the risk of discriminating against someone.

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