



This week in Employment Law

Train Chaos Causes Issues for Commuters

Ongoing disruptions with various UK rail services have caused serious problems for commuters nationwide. Thousands of employees have turned up to work late due to delayed or cancelled trains. What can employers do when faced with this problem?

- Taking a pragmatic approach to relaxing existing policies and introducing temporary working practices will help manage most problems.
- Holding informal meetings with affected staff will allow you to understand the extent of the problem and explore the opportunity of using alternative transport to travel to work e.g. bus, taxi or car share.
- Agreeing on an appropriate reporting method will allow staff to confirm ahead of time if they will be late to work on account of the rail disruptions.
- Employers may consider allowing individuals to make up time by working through some of their break periods or after work or allowing staff who are unable to attend work at all to work remotely from home.
- Whilst you can expect employees to turn up on time, you should keep in mind that lateness due to delayed or cancelled trains is largely out of employee's control and is affecting a significant amount of people.

Amazon drivers in gig economy claim

GMB union has announced they will take legal action on behalf of Amazon delivery drivers who feel they have been incorrectly classed as self employed. The drivers feel they are in fact workers and should be entitled to sick pay, holiday pay and National Minimum Wage as a result.

Did you know?

This is the latest 'bogus self-employment' claim that has affected the gig economy. In response the government is looking to introduce legislation and guidance which better defines employment status but may shift the current boundaries employers are used to.

Firms facing legal action over training fees

Several employers are facing legal challenges from staff who have been forced to repay large sums of money for 'arbitrary' training fees via a training agreement. These individuals claim they were coerced into remaining with the companies to avoid repayment costs.

Did you know?

Employers may require staff to repay funds for certain training courses if they leave the business within a designated time period. Currently these training agreements are seen as a legitimate way to protect the business' interests, however this may change depending on any resolution to this challenge.

Failure to consult sees staff win pay-out

Employees at the recently liquidated Black Dog Publishing company will be awarded compensation as the firm failed to adhere to the correct redundancy procedure. The company failed to consult with staff prior to their dismissal which is a statutory requirement.

Did you know?

Correct procedures for redundancy are laid out in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Employers should be aware that when large numbers of staff are faced with redundancy, minimum consultation periods apply.

Employee lateness, and other absence issues, can be a bugbear for employers but robust processes for both will help you keep on top of them and can also help to reduce occurrences. Showing employees that you view lateness as a serious issue by including a lateness policy in your employee handbook, and then taking steps in line with it, helps to ensure that they, too, take it seriously.

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