

This week in Employment Law

Work Stress Puts Vulnerable Men at Risk

Researchers call on firms to act as a study finds that men with ongoing medical conditions are 68% more likely to suffer premature death in stressful or demanding jobs with little reward. What steps can you take to address this?

- Making reasonable adjustments to support individuals known to be suffering from an ongoing illness or have a history of poor health.
- Taking a positive approach to requests for flexible working to support staff, including reduced hours or a period of home working and affording staff appropriate time off work during the day to attend GP and hospital appointments
- Encouraging overworked employees to report instances of stress and training line managers with the soft skills needed to spot and manage individuals in this situation.
- Introducing a Mental Health First Aider who can provide additional guidance to staff at work.
- Providing access to complimentary Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) which can help individuals manage personal problems that lead to emotional distress.
- Introducing incentive based schemes to reward employees for their work and encourage heightened productivity.

Firms to publish their executive Pay Ratio

Under new laws being laid in Parliament this week businesses will have to publish the gap between the salaries of their chief executive and average worker. If passed, firms with over 250 employees will need to justify the salaries of top bosses and disclose their pay ratio each year.

Did you know?

Recent examples have seen executives receive pay and bonus entitlements that are out of step with company performance. This proposal seeks to increase transparency and promote fair pay practices in a similar way to the recent gender pay gap reporting requirement.

Generational pay gap increases

A TUC report has found that the gap in earnings between individuals above and below 30 years of age has increased by 50% in the last 20 years. This difference in average annual wage currently stands at £5,844 a year for someone working a 40 hour week.

Did you know?

This wage disparity is likely down to the high ratio of 'millennials' employed in flexible work in the ever growing gig economy. The TUC have introduced a new digital app aimed at increasing union involvement and protecting younger individuals from exploitation.

Prior warnings not required for Misconduct dismissal

The EAT has ruled that a dismissal without prior warning is not necessarily unfair when the conduct falls short of being gross misconduct. Instead, it may be reasonable to dismiss an employee for an incident of misconduct which results in a loss of trust and confidence.

Did you know?

In *Quintiles Commercial UK Ltd vs Barongo* it was deemed that it may have been reasonable to dismiss the employee for failing to complete mandatory online training. The Employment Rights Act 1996 states that a dismissal is capable of being fair providing it is for a reason relating to the conduct of the employee.

Work related stress can present a major issue for employers resulting in increased absenteeism and a lack of productivity. Staff with pre-existing medical conditions may be adversely affected as a result of work related stress and steps need to be taken to mitigate this. Making adjustments to accommodate employees who suffer with health difficulties is vital, whilst it is also important to take a proactive approach to managing staff workloads and stress levels.

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