



This Week in Employment Law

Proposed changes to Employment Rights Bill

The Government has tabled a significant number of amendments to the Employment Rights Bill following its responses to consultations carried out last year.

- The amendments have been put forward in preparation for the Bill reaching the next stage of consideration in the House of Commons next week.
- The Government has published its responses to consultations ranging from zero hours contracts to Statutory Sick Pay which will inform the content of the Bill.
- The proposed amendments cover reforms to Statutory Sick Pay, agency workers' rights, 'fire and rehire' and collective redundancies and more.
- Several changes are proposed to increase trade union rights on the areas of recognition, industrial action, and access to the workplace.
- These amendments are proposals at this stage. The Bill will need to go through the remaining parliamentary process before becoming law.

Croner has you covered: our HR Documentation Team will provide all updated and new policies and contracts for your business. Our 24/7 HR Advisory Team are here 365 days a year. You can also get answers to questions like [What situations do I need to use collective redundancy consultation?](#) from [Croner BrAIinbox](#).

1.3 million more workers to be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay

Under the Government's proposed amendments to the Employment Rights Bill, up to 1.3 million more workers will be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), with those on low wages receiving either 80 per cent of their average weekly earnings or the current rate of SSP, whichever is lower. All workers will be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay for the very first time. Workers will also have the right to SSP from the first day of sickness absence. The aim of these changes is to encourage staff to take the time off they need to recover, helping to prevent long-term absences. If these changes become law, it will be vital for employers to have robust absence management procedures.

Did you know?

Our 24/7 HR Advisory Team can answer any queries on Statutory Sick Pay entitlement.

'Fire and rehire' awards set to increase

The Government has tabled amendments to its proposals on 'fire and rehire' in the Employment Rights Bill, following its response to a consultation on strengthening remedies against abuse of rules on collective redundancy. Under the amendments, the maximum period of the protective award in collective redundancy and 'fire and rehire' situations will increase from 90 days to 180 days and further guidance will be issued for employers on consultation processes. This will make tribunal claims more costly for employers who fail to meet consultation requirements. The Government says that it wants to enhance the deterrent for employers who ignore their consultation obligations.

Did you know?

Our Croner Face2Face Team can provide a mediation service to help you to effectively resolve workplace disputes.

More rights for agency workers

More rights for agency workers have been proposed as part of the Government's amendments to the Employment Rights Bill. The Government proposes to extend the zero hours contracts measures in the Bill to agency workers, including the right to a guaranteed hours contract which reflects the hours they regularly work, the right to reasonable notice for the cancelling, changing or curtailment of shifts and the right to payment for shifts cancelled, moved or curtailed at short notice. This follows the Government's consultation response on the application of the zero hours contracts measures to agency workers. We will have to see how this will work in practice.

Did you know?

Our HR Documentation Team can help you to make sure that your agency workers have the documents they need.

Employer responsibilities for managing dust in the workplace

Dust in the workplace can pose serious health risks. UK businesses must comply with health and safety laws to protect employees. Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002, employers have a legal duty to assess and control dust exposure. Employers must identify sources of dust and assess the level of exposure and implement control measures such as local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems, provide personal protective equipment (PPE), and ensure good housekeeping to minimise dust build-up. This includes the use of vacuum systems instead of dry sweeping, ventilating work areas correctly and proper storage of materials to reduce airborne dust. Workers regularly exposed to harmful dust should undergo health monitoring and health surveillance.

Did you know?

Employees should be informed about the risks of dust in the workplace and trained in safe working practices.

Please contact the 24 hour advice service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.