

EMPLOYMENT LAW CHANGES APRIL 2024

Flexible Working

New legislation regarding flexible working comes into effect on 6 April 2024 giving employees more flexibility over where and when they work.

Previously, employees were required to have 26 weeks service in order to make a flexible working request, for example to request different working hours or a different work location. Under the new legislation, employees will be able to make such requests from the first day of their employment.

Further regulations are expected which:

- remove the requirement upon employees to state what effect a flexible working request would have on their employer's business and how any such effect could be addressed;
- enable employees to make two flexible working requests in any 12-month period (rather than one request at present); and
- oblige employers to respond to flexible working requests within two months, rather than three at present.

Carer's Leave Act 2023

The Act applies to anyone caring for a spouse, civil partner, child, parent or other dependant who needs care because of a disability, old age or any illness or injury likely to require at least three months' care.

Employees to whom the Act applies may take unpaid leave for a maximum period of one week each year. The leave is available to employees irrespective of their length of service, i.e. it is a *'day one'* right. Whilst employers cannot deny an employee's request to take carer's leave, they can postpone the leave if the Company's business would be unduly disrupted if it was taken.

Employment law and people management experts.

Bond Legal Limited is incorporated and registered in England and Wales, number: **11723699**

Registered Office: **19A The Nook, Anstey, Leicester LE7 7AZ**

VAT registration number: **349 9841 39**

National Minimum Wage

The rates of National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage increase as follows from 1 April 2024:

- National Living Wage (21 and over): £11.44 per hour
- 18-20 rate: £8.60 per hour
- 16-17 rate: £6.40 per hour
- Apprentice rate: £6.40 per hour
- Accommodation offset: £9.99 per day

Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023

Employees on maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave already have special protection in a redundancy situation, namely the right of *'first refusal'* of any suitable alternative roles.

However, from 6 April 2024, that protection is extended to pregnant employees and those who have recently returned from maternity or adoption leave and shared parental leave.

Redundancy and other rates

With effect from 6 April 2024:

- the amount of a 'weeks' pay' for calculating statutory redundancy payments increases from £643 to £700. That means that the maximum available statutory redundancy payment increases to £21,000.00 (i.e. 20 x £700.00 x 1.5);
- the maximum *'compensatory award'* in unfair dismissal claims increases to £115,115 on the 6th April 2024; and
- the rate of Statutory Sick Pay increases to £116.75 per week.

