



## Employment Rights Bill confirmed for October

**Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister, has confirmed at the Labour Party Conference that the new Employment Rights Bill will be introduced to parliament in October.**

- When Labour won the election in July, they said they would introduce a new Employment Rights Bill within 100 days of entering power, i.e. by mid-October. Following the Deputy Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday, we now know that the government intends to keep to this timescale.
- This means that we will soon have much more detail on the government's plans to reform workers' rights, which it is hoped will bring some certainty for employers.
- With over 60 proposed changes put forward in Labour's pre-election 'Plan to Make Work Pay', the government's reforms are expected to have a massive impact on the employment law landscape as we know it.
- Key changes that are expected to be covered in the Bill include removing the two-year period before unfair dismissal protection applies, introducing a new right to disconnect (or 'switch off'), abolishing zero-hour contracts that are 'exploitative', making flexible working the default from day one of employment, and many more.
- **Our HR Documentation Team will provide all new and amended policies and contract updates and our 24/7 HR Advisory Team are here to help you keep up to speed with these developments as they happen. You can also get answers to questions like [What law changes will be covered in the new Employment Rights Bill?](#) from [Croner BrAInbox](#).**

### Government's plans for day one unfair dismissal rights

According to reports, as part of the government's plans to introduce day one unfair dismissal rights, they will allow employers to implement a probation period for new starters of up to 6 months. This will hopefully be welcome news for employers as it may help to soften the impact of staff having a day one right to claim unfair dismissal. Also, many organisations will already have a probation period of 6 months or less in their contracts of employment for new starters. It is not yet clear how probation periods will work alongside the right to claim unfair dismissal from the start of the employment. Further detail of the proposals are expected in the Employment Rights Bill.

Did you know?

For guidance on safely navigating probationary dismissals, contact our 24/7 HR Advisory Team.

### Impact of poor work-life balance on wellbeing

New research by Prottime UK has found that 67% of UK employees do not feel that they can fully switch off or keep work-life boundaries. The report also found that poor work-life balance negatively impacted 41% of employees' wellbeing on a daily or weekly basis. Although the government are proposing to introduce the right to 'switch off' as part of its reforms of workers' rights, organisations should continue to ensure the effectiveness of their overall wellbeing strategy. Businesses that proactively support their employees' work-life balance can benefit from reduced sickness absences, lower staff turnover and a more productive and happier workforce.

Did you know?

Our partner, Health Assured can provide an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for your employees.

### Successful claim brought after personal use of printer

The claimant used the respondent's printer to print 759 pages for their personal use. Following a disciplinary hearing the claimant was issued with a first written warning. The claimant then raised a grievance about the situation and ultimately resigned. They brought a successful claim for constructive unfair dismissal. The employment tribunal held that the respondent delayed dealing with and failed to investigate the grievance and they did not develop a strategy to deal with the claimant's concerns as advised by an occupational health adviser. The claimant was awarded a total of £22,748.34 in compensation. (*Idowu v West London YMCA*).

Did you know?

Our Croner Face2Face Team can hold grievance hearings with your employees so that you don't have to.

### Dangers of dust in the workplace

Quantities of dust in the air carries a serious risk of damage to health, and specific dusts pose health risks at very low quantities, such as silica dust. Most dusts have a workplace exposure limit which can be found in a HSE document called EH40. A workplace exposure limit (WEL) is a legal limit on the amount of hazardous substances that are allowed in the air at a workplace. WELs are set to protect the health of workers and are concentrations of hazardous substances averaged over a specific period of time. Depending on the control measures that you have implemented, employers may be required to implement health surveillance.

Did you know?

Employers should not rely on health surveillance and inform workers to provide any symptoms to them in-between health surveillance appointments.

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