

HR *focus*

Employment Law



Flexible Working

Changes to employees' rights to ask for flexible working came into force on 6 April 2024.

What are the flexible working changes in 2024?



The new flexible working legislation removes the requirement for an employee to have 26 weeks' continuous service before they can make a formal flexible working request. This means the right to request flexible working becomes a 'day-one' right.

Employees will also be able to make up to two flexible working requests every 12 months, a change from the current single request.

The Act will reduce the time limit for employers to deal with flexible working requests from three to two months, although this can be extended if the employee agrees.

Carers Leave

New statutory leave entitlement for carers came into force in the UK on 6 April 2024.

The [legislation](#) entitles employees in England, Wales and Scotland up to a week of *unpaid* leave each year to look after someone who relies on them because they are ill, have an injury, are disabled, or have care needs because of their age. It will be a day-one right, meaning there is no requirement for a certain length of service.



How does carer's leave work?

Employees will be able to take up to a week every 12 months, with a 'week' meaning the length of time they normally work over seven days. So, if someone usually works three days a week, they can take three pro-rated days of carer's leave in a year. This can be taken all at once, as half days or full days.

Carers leave cannot be used to provide general childcare but can be for a child who has long-term health or disability-related care needs. This is covered by unpaid parental leave.

The amount of leave does not increase if the employee has more than one dependant in need of care, it is still a maximum of one working week every 12 months.

Menopause and the Workplace



Employers should make sure they have steps, procedures and support in place to help staff affected by the menopause.

Having regular conversations with staff and listening to their concerns might help resolve issues early on before any potential legal action is taken.

Employers should make sure they know how the menopause relates to the law, including the:

- Equality Act 2010, which protects workers against discrimination
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which says an employer must, where reasonably practical, ensure everyone's health, safety and welfare at work

For more information: <https://www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work/menopause-and-the-law>



Steps to Prevent Workplace Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Since 26 October 2024, employers must take reasonable steps to **prevent** sexual harassment. This requires employers to anticipate scenarios in which sexual harassment might take place and be proactive, rather than reactive.

Breach of this duty means up to a 25% uplift on compensation for a claimant who has brought a successful sexual harassment claim but also potential enforcement by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

How to deal with this?

- ✓ Update your Harassment and Bullying policies;
- ✓ Anticipate that sexual harassment might take place and implement a policy that is fit for purpose;
- ✓ Carry out a tailored **risk assessment** to assess how you reduce the opportunities for and steps you will work towards to prevent sexual harassment in the work place;
- ✓ Train staff
- ✓ Raise awareness e.g., who would an employee go to if they wanted to report sexual harassment;
- ✓ Monitor - not just the complaints but the policies and training.



HR Training Programme

Line Management training

(these trainings are delivered on Zoom)

Our training sessions are around an hour long and covers below topics:

- Line Management – Basics
- Managing Performance
- Appraisals
- Managing Attendance
- Flexible Working
- Recruitment
- Equalities
- Policies – Equalities, Capability, Disciplinary, Grievance

For more information and booking, visit our training page: [Training](#)

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Statutory Rates Updates

Item	Effective	2025 £
Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental and Parental Bereavement Pay <i>per week</i>	7 April	187.18
Statutory Sick Pay <i>per week</i>	6 April	118.75
Limit for Statutory Redundancy Pay <i>per week</i>	6 April	719.00
Lower earnings limit <i>per week</i>	6 April	125.00
National Living Wage prior to April 2024, 23 & over <i>per hour</i>	1 April	-
Minimum Wage 21 & over (prior to April 2024, 21 – 22) <i>per hour</i>	1 April	12.21
Minimum Wage 18-20 <i>per hour</i>	1 April	10.00
Minimum Wage under 18 <i>per hour</i>	1 April	7.55
Minimum Wage Apprentice <i>per hour</i>	1 April	7.55
Accommodation offset (per day)	1 April	10.66
Living Wage Foundation – Outside London <i>per hour</i>	Announced in October for implementation no later than the following 1 May	12.60
Living Wage Foundation – London <i>per hour</i>		13.85

**The United Reformed Church, General Assembly in 2008, agreed to encourage local churches who employ staff to pay at least the Living Wage Foundation hourly rate.*