



November 2019 Update

Welcome to this month's update - where we discuss the latest legislation and guidance.

In this month's edition, we report on:

- Managing stress in the workplace
 - Anti-bullying guidance
 - Investigation reports – what should they include?
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Managing stress in the workplace

National Stress Awareness Day fell on 6th November this year, as part of international stress awareness week (4th – 8th November 2019).

What can employers do to help?

- * Talk to your employees. If the employee does not want to talk – encourage them to speak to the GP. Some organisations offer an employee assistance program (telephone support).
- * Talk about stress busters, such as exercise. Exercising can help reduce tension and help with self-esteem.
- * Talk about healthy eating.
- * Make sure employees take regular breaks and their holiday

Other thoughts are to set up an employee council to make suggestions on positive things in the workplace, rather than just a moaning session.

Employers: fostering wellbeing will help with motivation and retention.

Contact us: we can assist with employee stress issues

Anti-bullying guidance

Anti-bullying week falls on the 11-15 November. What constitutes bullying? What policies can employers put in place to help reduce instances of bullying?

Bullying and harassment is any unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended. It is not always obvious to others and may happen without an employer's awareness.

People do not always feel able to complain, particularly if it involves a senior member of staff. Sometimes they just resign.

Examples of bullying / harassing behaviour could include:

- * spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- * exclusion or victimisation
- * unfair treatment
- * deliberately undermining a competent worker by constant criticism.

There are a number of ways to prevent this behaviour:

- * develop and implement a policy: it can be simple. It helps when you involve staff reviewing it
- * include a standard of behaviour, maybe in a handbook
- * set a good example, including the managers
- * have fair procedures to deal with concerns

Employers: if such behaviour is tolerated productivity is affected

Contact us: we can help with developing policies

Investigation reports – what should they include?

A recent case of *Dr J Dronsfield v The University of Reading* looked at what should investigators focus on when writing their investigation report?

It appears only facts and not opinions

Dr Dronsfield was an academic at the University of Reading who was dismissed. He brought a claim that amendments to the investigation report rendered his dismissal procedurally unfair. The amendments removed the opinion of the investigator.

The court found that the amendments did not make the report procedural unfair. But in any case, investigation reports as part of the disciplinary process should focus only on facts and not views.

Employers: investigation reports must be balanced and backed up by evidence

Contact us: We can assist with investigations and disciplinaries

For more information or assistance Email: enquiries@employmentlawsupport.co.uk



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