



April 2021 Update

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

In this month's edition, we report on:

- April 2021 increases to National Minimum Wage and other payments
 - Why employers should value age diversity
 - Businesses are now more aware of menopause related burnout
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April 2021 increases to the National Minimum Wage and other payments

The National Minimum Wage increased from 1 April 2021 as follows:

- * For 21 -22-year olds, from £8.20 to £8.36 (up 2%).
- * For 18 -20-year olds, from £6.45 to £6.56 (up 1.7%).
- * under 18 years, from £4.55 to £4.62 (up 1.5%).

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) has increased from £94.25 to £96.35 per week for eligible employees.

Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Shared Parental Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Bereavement Pay have all increased from £148.68 to £151.97 per week.

The cap on a week's pay for a statutory redundancy payment has increased from £538 to £544 per week.

This means that the maximum statutory redundancy payment for 20 years' service or more is now £16,320.

This is also the maximum Basic Award in an unfair dismissal claim to award length of service but does not deal with any compensatory award.

Employers: make sure that you review your employees pay scales, particularly young people once they reach 21 years.

Contact us: for specialist HR advice and guidance, including contracts of employment and policies.

Why Employers should value age diversity

When it comes to diversity, we tend to focus on gender and ethnicity; but age is also important for an inclusive and effective workplace.

According to recent research, businesses who create supportive workplaces for older staff will see improved productivity, as well as a whole host of other benefits.

Almost a third of the UK's workforce is aged over 50, reflecting an ageing population and a steady rise over two decades in the employment rate of older workers. According to official statistics, almost three-quarters of people aged 50-64 were in work in 2020, compared with just 56 per cent in 1984.

However, the recent pandemic has taken its toll, with 175,000 more people aged 50-64 out of work since March 2020 and more than 640,000 over-55s still on furlough.

This is concerning as older workers who fall out of the workforce are twice as likely to become long-term unemployed. And when job-hunting later in life, there are plenty of obstacles to overcome including health issues, a lack of access to retraining and ageism. Without positive steps being put in place there is the possibility of an unemployment crisis among older workers that may force many into poverty during retirement.

With the state pension age rising to 67 in years to come, many more people will have to keep working through necessity, rather than choice. Employers and business leaders have an opportunity now to look at ways to make jobs better for older workers.

They also need to recognise the productivity benefits of multigenerational teams.

After all, older workers:

- Bring experience
- Create a balanced workforce
- Are loyal and trustworthy
- Can mentor younger team members
- Improve staff retention rates
- Increase staff morale
- Enable effective skill transfer

So next time you are recruiting, do not fall into the trap of believing that older people are “overpaid” and can be “replaced with younger workers” who can do the job just as well. The scientific evidence disputes this. Evidently knowledge and expertise — the main predictors of job performance — can increase even beyond the age of 80.

Any business owner who is hesitant to hire an older worker needs to bear in mind that an older workers' unique skills and values, combined with potential time and money savings, makes hiring them a simple option.

Employers: for a happier and balanced business look at the value older workers can bring.

Contact us: we can help your business with reviews of staff structures, contract documentation and policies.

Businesses are now more aware of menopause related burnout

The perimenopause affects a huge proportion of the workforce and employers need to consider what support they have in place.

With mental health issues a key issue in the Covid pandemic, we can now at last have a constructive conversation about a concern for many women: the menopause.

This is not the same as the work-related burnout suffered by professionals running on adrenaline. Perimenopause is experienced by women as they approach menopause. It's estimated that 25 per cent of women are in perimenopause by the time they reach 40.

Many companies are putting in place support mechanisms, which includes training managers to be able to assist in dealing with these issues.

A positive, well-communicated strategy for supporting women going through this stage in their lives is vital for individual performance and mental health.

It also is imperative for any employer who is committed to supporting gender equality and developing and retaining professional skills. When managers do not understand or lack training this can lead to unconscious bias, stereotyping and misinformation.

However, with the right support and processes in place, this can be a positive time for women.

Employers: managers that understand how to read the signs are better able to intervene early and help women with the right kind of support.

Contact us: we can assist with a menopause policy and support for your team.

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



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Business Forum

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Employment Law Support Principal: Caroline Robertson
Solicitor Non-Practising