



Employment Law Changes

What's new?

Day-one Paternity and Parental Leave

From 1 April 2026, employees are entitled to paternity and parental leave from day one of employment, rather than the previous 26 weeks' minimum service requirement for paternity leave and one year's minimum service requirement for parental leave.

Trade Unions

From 6 April 2026, employers are required to inform workers of their legal right to join a trade union through written statements.

Additionally, for employers of at least 21 workers, trade union recognition becomes easier through a simpler majority voting system and a reduction in the threshold for the number of workers required in a proposed bargaining unit from 40 percent to just 10 percent. Also, recognised trade unions will have enhanced rights to access workplaces.

Sexual Harassment

From 6 April 2026, employees who report sexual harassment at work will gain stronger legal protections as sexual harassment will be classified as a Qualifying Disclosure under Whistleblowing law. It comes alongside wider reforms which include a stronger requirement for employers to take "all reasonable steps" to prevent harassment and new liability for third-party incidents.

Holiday Pay Recording

From 6 April 2026, employers will be required to retain "adequate" records of statutory holiday entitlement and pay for at least six years. This will include records of ordinary and additional annual leave, any leave carried forward, payments made in lieu of leave and details of holiday pay calculations. Whilst there is no prescribed format for records, they must be clear, accurate and accessible.

The below also comes into force this month (as included in previous HR Bulletins):

Family Leave Pay

From 6 April 2026, the flat weekly rate for Statutory Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental, Parental Bereavement and Neonatal Care Pay will increase from £187.18 to £194.32.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

From 6 April 2026, SSP will become payable from the first day of illness and the pay will increase from £118.75 to £123.25 per week. All employees will be eligible regardless of their earnings level; either 80% of an employee's average weekly earnings or the increased rate of £123.25, whichever is lower.



National Minimum and Living Wage

From 1 April 2026, the following rates apply:

- £12.71 per hour for workers aged 21 and over
- £10.85 per hour for workers aged 18 to 20
- £8.00 per hour for workers aged 16 and 17, and apprentices under 19 years or over 19 years in their first year of apprenticeship

Fair Work Agency

From 7 April 2026, there will be the establishment of an agency whereby officers will have investigative powers which could include inspecting workplaces, demanding evidence of compliance, and launching legal actions on behalf of workers. The government has stated that the agency will focus on areas such as enforcing the National Minimum Wage, holiday pay, statutory sick pay, and labour exploitation.

Bereaved Partners' Paternity Leave

From 6 April 2026, should an employee's partner or mother of their child die within the first year of a child's life or adoption, the employee will have a new statutory right to take unpaid Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave. This will be a 'day-one' right and the leave can be up to 52 weeks, depending on when the bereavement occurs.

What do I need to do?

Familiarise yourself with the above changes and consider how these will impact your business.

If you already engage with ourselves for contract and HR policy/procedure reviews, we will be updating your documents over the coming weeks and be in touch with you regarding these.

Do get in touch should you require assistance in navigating the above changes, via telephone on 0116 216 9224 / 07904 151008 or email jacqui@greensconsultancy.co.uk