



Employment Law Changes

What's new?

The government has announced several updates and changes to employment law over the next year, including confirmation that employee unfair dismissal protection will be reduced from 2 years to 6 months from the beginning of next year.

What are the most significant changes?

From April 2026:

Family Leave Pay

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

As well as being payable from the first day of sickness absence (rather than payable from the fourth day, as currently), 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 uprated flat rate of £123.25, whichever is lower.

National Minimum and Living Wage

As a reminder, the following rates will also apply in April:

- £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

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.

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From April 2026: (...cont'd)

Bereaved Partners' Paternity Leave

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.

From January 2027:

Unfair Dismissal Protection

The qualifying period for unfair dismissal will be reduced to 6 months (from 2 years). This will mean that employees who already have 6 months' service or more will qualify for protection and new starters will gain this protection once they reach 6 months' service.

There will be no change to the current existing day-one protections against unfair dismissal linked to discrimination.

Fire and Rehire

It will be more difficult for employers to dismiss employees and rehire them under a different contract of employment.

Should an employer make change/s to terms of employment without employees' agreement and they are subsequently dismissed, it will automatically be classed as an unfair dismissal.

What do I need to do?

Familiarise yourself with the above changes and consider how these will impact your business when they become law.

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