



Do you employ staff?

Do you have difficulty understanding your legal and contractual responsibilities as an employer?

Do employment problems keep you awake at night?

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Employment Law Update

1st April 2014

- The Automatic Enrolment (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/2556) extend the time period available to employers for auto-enrolling eligible job holders into a qualifying pension scheme from one month to six weeks.

6th April 2014

- From 6th April the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 will require potential claimants to lodge details of their proposed employment tribunal claim with ACAS in the first instance. The opportunity to conciliate with a conciliation officer for a prescribed period of time will then be offered. Where the conciliation officer concludes that a settlement is not possible, or where the prescribed period ends without reaching a settlement, the claimant, will then be provided with a certificate permitting him or her to then issue proceedings.
- From 6th April Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) will increase from £136.78 per week to £138.18 per week.
- Also the standard rate of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will increase from £86.70 per week to £87.55 per week.

- The Chancellor George Osborne announced in the Budget 2013 that all businesses, including charities, will be entitled to receive an employment allowance of £2,000 per annum towards their National Insurance Contributions Bill. The allowance can be claimed by ticking the 'yes' box on the first employer payment summary (EPS) submitted for the new tax/payroll year. The allowance will be set against the employer's Class 1 NIC liability as it accrues over the tax year by the payroll software.

Unspecified in April

- The Reserve forces (Call-out and Recall) (financial Assistance) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/859), which provide financial assistance to employers whose employees are absent due to mobilised service, will be amended. The white paper "Reserves in the Future Force 2020" states that the amendments will ensure that "the financial limits and the types of costs open for claim, including for training of replacement staff, are appropriate and that the administrative arrangements are streamlined". The Government also plans to introduce legislation that will allow the Secretary of State to make a payment of £500 per reservist per month when mobilised to small – and medium – sized enterprises.
- The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 will give Employment Tribunals the power to levy a financial penalty against employers that are in breach of employment rights where the breach has one or more aggravating features. If the tribunal makes an award of compensation, the amount of the penalty will be 50% of the award. The penalty is subject to a minimum threshold of £100 and an upper ceiling of £5,000. Employers will qualify for a reduction of 50% if they pay the penalty within 21 days.

If you have any queries relating to any of the subjects raised within this newsletter then please don't hesitate to contact us at hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk

For clarification of any of the above updates or for advice and guidance on any HR and/or Health and Safety Concerns contact us by emailing hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk or by calling 02476 664092.

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