



September 2014



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## Employment Law Update

### National Minimum Wage

The annual update to the NMW will occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, the changes to wages will be as follows:

- £2.73 an hour for apprentices under 19 years of age or aged 19 and over who are in their first year of the apprenticeship
- £3.79 an hour for employees aged 16-17 years old
- £5.13 an hour for employees aged 18-20 years old
- £6.50 an hour for employees aged 21 and over.

### The Children and Families Act

As of October 2014, Fathers will have the right to take time out of work for antenatal appointments. Fathers and partners of pregnant women will be given the right to accompany the pregnant women to two of her appointments.

Another legal change for families is the introduction of Shared Parental Leave. Whilst this change will only affect the parents of children who are born or adopted on or after the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2015, it is being introduced now. This change will allow parents to share the care for their child in the first year of the child's life. This will allow both parents to take shared control of parental leave and claim shared statutory maternity pay after the compulsory two-week maternity leave period. Employees will have to request this type of leave at

least 8 weeks before they intend on taking it. Employees who take this leave will also be entitled to 20 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days, and provided the leave does not last for longer than 26 weeks the employees will retain the right to return to work in the same role as they were previously.

## Equal Pay Audits

From October 2014, the Government is introducing a regulation that will give Employment Tribunals the power to order equal pay audits where an employer is found guilty of gender pay discrimination, in relation to contractual or non-contractual matters. Despite the Equal Pay Act 2010, many Employment Tribunal claims are still raised by employees arguing that they are not being paid equally, with many resulting in a win for the employees. Employment Tribunals will now have the authority to sign off audits and cash penalties for companies that are found to be non-compliant with these new regulations. The audit results will be published to "name and shame" those companies found "guilty" unless there are specific legal reasons which would prevent this from happening. Micro-businesses with less than 10 employees will be exempt from this regulation.

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](mailto:hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk) or by calling 02476 664092.

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