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**Human Resources & Health and Safety**



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Do you employ staff?

## Employment Law Update June 2016

### Compensatory Award Limits

On 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 there was an increase in the compensation limits that can be awarded to employees. Please find the new amounts below:

- The maximum amount of “a weeks’ pay” for the purposes of calculating a basic or additional award of compensation for unfair dismissal, a breach of contract/wrongful dismissal, or redundancy has risen from £475 to £495.
- The maximum basic award for unfair dismissal and statutory redundancy payment (30 weeks’ pay subject to the limit on a week’s pay) has risen from £14,250 to £14,370.
- The maximum compensatory award for unfair dismissal has risen from £78,335 to £78,962.
- The maximum compensatory award for breach of contract or unfair dismissal has remained at £25,000.

### Gender Pay Gap Reporting Initiated

On 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016, gender pay gap reporting officially began. This does not mean that employers need to start reporting the gaps in pay now, employers with 250 or more employees in the private and voluntary sectors must have published their first report by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018, but the data they use in their first report must be collected from the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016 onwards.

The report must include information on the pay gap, including bonus payments, between men and women. These reports will be published annually and must contain data from the preceding 12 months. Please note: "bonus payments" includes payments received in relation to profit-sharing, productivity, performance and other bonus or incentive pay, piecework and commission; long-term incentive plans or schemes (whether the bonus is dependent on individual performance or performance of the company); and the cash equivalent value of shares on the date of payment.

Whilst there will be no negative repercussion for companies who do demonstrate a noticeable gender pay gap, the intention of the reporting process is that it will hopefully prevent unnecessary gender pay gaps, helping to maintain equality in the workplace.

### **Control of Electromagnetic Fields at Work Implemented**

As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 the regulations set out in the Electromagnetic Fields Directive (2013/35/EU) will be implemented. Under these regulations employers are now required to assess and, where possible, limit the levels of electromagnetic fields their employees or workers are exposed to. The purpose of this regulation is to minimize any health risks that arise from electromagnetic field exposure, but it is also to increase the amount of information and training given to employees who work in environments where they are likely to be exposed to electromagnetic fields. Medical examinations should also be provided by the employer where an employee has a high level of exposure to electromagnetic fields, or where an employee is exhibiting symptoms of ill health that may be related to exposure to electromagnetic fields.

### **Future Employment Law Changes**

There are times when the Government announces employment law changes suddenly or at the very last minute. When this occurs we will endeavour to update you as early as possible. In an effort to prepare you for up and coming changes, we have taken the liberty of preparing a short list of imminent changes that do not currently have implementation dates:

- The Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 will fully come into force over the next few years. This Act contains various provisions relating to employment law, tribunal procedures, and pay. Each time a section of this Act is introduced it will be reported on individually.
- The Trade Union Bill will reform the rules on trade union ballots in order for unions to take strike action. We will address this issue once the implementation date and more information has been published.

### **How Can We Help?**

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](mailto:hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk)

