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Human Resources & Health and Safety



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Do you employ staff?

An Employment Law “Round Up” for the Year Ahead

1st April

Traditionally, any changes to the National Minimum Wage would be announced in October of each year. However, after the introduction of the National Living Wage, for which any changes are announced annually in April, a Governmental review has resulted in the two being aligned. From April 2017 onwards, any updates or changes to the National Minimum Wage will be announced, the same time of year as announcements relating to the National Living Wage. On the same day, the new rates for the National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage, will be announced.

2nd April

The standard rates of **Maternity**, **Paternity**, **Adoption**, **Shared Parental** and **Statutory Sick** pay may also increase - we will communicate the new rates in due course.

5th April

Gender Pay Gap Reporting; Employers in the private and voluntary sector, with 250 or more eligible employees, will be required to calculate and publish the mean and median gender pay gap present in their Company. The first report must be published by the 4th April 2018. We will publish a more detailed newsletter on this subject, providing advice and guidance, nearer the time.

6th April

The Apprenticeship Levy, introduced in the Finance Act 2016, will come into force. This legislation is intended to help fund the training and education of apprentices, and will only affect employers with pay bills of more than £3 million per annum.

The Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) (Amendment No.3) Regulations 2016 (SI 2016/1137) will be implemented, which extends what can be included in voluntary pay-rolling.

TBC in April

Section 85 of the Immigration Act 2016 introduces an immigration skills charge, so that employers that employ migrant workers under tier 2 of the points-based system of immigration will be subject to a levy. The minimum salary threshold for migrant workers under tier 2 of the points-based system will also increase.

TBC in 2017

- The Trade Union Act 2016, which reforms the rules on balloting and industrial action, is expected to be implemented this year.
- A new law which, protects NHS Whistle-blowers from discrimination when applying for other NHS roles, is expected this year. This is a provision included in The Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.
- Similarly, the Children and Social Work Bill, which is expected this year, provides protection for job applicants applying for roles relating to children's social care functions in local authorities to ensure that they are not discriminated against because they have previously made protected disclosures.
- The Enterprise Act 2016, which establishes a Small Business Commissioner, prevents the misuse of the term of "apprenticeship", and enhances shop workers' rights in regards to Sunday working, as well as many other things, is expected to be implemented during 2017.
- Public sector exit payments will be made repayable, under Repayment of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2016, for employees with an annual earning of £80,000 or more, and who return to work in the public sector within one year of leaving. It is also expected that exit payments will be capped at £95,000.

How We Can Help

Employment Law changes will be announced throughout the year, and we will always endeavour to publish our informative newsletters ahead of these changes, to provide our readers with the necessary advice and guidance. If you have any questions about any of the subjects raised in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact us via hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk