



HR-ONE

HUMAN RESOURCES
CONSULTANCY

NEWSLETTER

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ISSUES #07

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EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATES

April marks the first major implementation phase of the Employment Rights Bill - the biggest shift in UK employment law in over a decade. While later reforms will follow into 2027, the April changes are confirmed and require preparation now.

- Day one rights for parental leave

Employees will no longer need a qualifying period to access parental leave. Policies, onboarding materials, and manager guidance should be updated to reflect this immediate entitlement.

- Statutory Sick Pay reforms

SSP will be payable from the first day of absence, and the Lower Earnings Limit will be removed. This expands eligibility for lower-paid workers and requires updates to payroll processes, sickness reporting, and return-to-work procedures.

- Strengthened whistleblowing protections

Employers must ensure reporting channels are clear, confidential, and accessible, with refreshed training and communication to support safe disclosure.



PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO DO NOW

This is the ideal moment to strengthen the foundations that will support compliance throughout 2026.

Recruitment & Probation

With day-one rights expanding, employers need clear job descriptions, structured probation reviews, consistent onboarding, and well-documented decision-making – especially important for small teams where each hire has a big impact.

Sickness Processes

The removal of SSP wait days means absence reporting must be robust, return-to-work conversations consistent, and payroll ready for the change. Sectors with higher short-term absence may feel this most.

Family Leave Policies

Update handbooks, induction materials, and manager guidance so new starters receive accurate information about parental leave from day one.

Zero-Hours & Variable Hours Workers

If you rely on flexible staffing, begin mapping who is on zero-hours, their typical patterns, and how predictable their hours already are. This groundwork will make future compliance far easier.



WHAT'S COMING NEXT

While April brings the first wave of reforms, further changes are expected through late 2026 and into 2027. Key developments include new harassment-prevention duties (October 2026), predictable-hours requests for zero-hours workers, day-one unfair dismissal rights (expected 2027), and Fair Work Agency enforcement with six-year record-keeping requirements.

You don't need to overhaul everything now, but early preparation will make the transition smoother. Useful steps include mapping who is on zero-hours or variable hours, reviewing shift-scheduling practices, ensuring documentation is consistent and complete, and strengthening early-stage performance management. These foundations support compliance today and reduce pressure as later reforms come into force.

If you'd like support reviewing your policies or preparing for these changes, please get in touch

BUSINESS AS USUAL

This is a quietly critical point in the HR cycle, and alongside the April reforms, employers should stay focused on the core seasonal tasks that keep operations running smoothly. Annual leave planning helps prevent the spring and summer bottleneck, while budgeting for April's increases, including NMW and statutory payment changes, ensures financial readiness. Mid-Q1 check-ins are a valuable moment to reconnect teams after winter and reset expectations for the year ahead. It's also a good time for policy housekeeping, particularly where updates link to the April changes. Finally, workforce planning should take account of seasonal patterns, flexible working requests, and resourcing needs to support a steady start to the new financial year