Adams solicitors HARRISON

Employment Law News for Employers – Winter 2014/2015

Minimum wage

The national minimum wage was increased on 01.10.14.

The standard adult rate (for workers aged 21 and over) rose by 3% to **£6.50** an hour (up 19p from £6.31).
The youth development rate (for workers aged between 18 and 20) rose by 2% to **£5.13** an hour (up 10p from £5.03).
The young workers rate (for workers aged under 18 but above the compulsory school age who are not apprentices) rose by 2% to **£3.79** an hour (up 7p from £3.72).
The rate for apprentices rose by 2% to **£2.73** an hour (up 5p from £2.68).

Make sure you comply – penalties for breaching can be harsh. Enforcement action can be taken by the worker or the government - for civil or criminal proceedings.

Flexible Working

From 30.06.14 the law states that all employees with at least 26 weeks service can request a flexible working pattern. The obligation on the employer is to consider the request, not necessarily grant it. However, there are only certain grounds upon which a request can be refused.

- Do you have a policy for flexible working?
- Would you know how to deal with a request?
- What do you do if you want to refuse the request?

We can assist with all of the above.

Shared Parental Leave

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduces a new entitlement for employees who are parents, to take shared parental leave (SPL) in the first year of their child's life or in the first year after their child's placement for adoption where a child is born or placed for adoption after 05.04.15.

Parents are not obliged to take SPL. The default position on the birth of a child will be that the 52 weeks of maternity leave (39 weeks paid) will remain in place for the mother, as will compulsory maternity leave which applies from the day of the child's birth for a period of 2 weeks.

A mother will be able to end their maternity leave or commit to ending it at a future date, and share the untaken leave with the other parent as SPL. This will enable mothers to return to work before the end of their leave, without sacrificing the rest of the leave that would otherwise be available to them. SPL can either be taken consecutively or concurrently, as long as the total time taken does not exceed what is jointly available to the couple.

A parent who wishes to benefit from SPL has to give their employer notice and details of the start and end dates. An employer can refuse intermittent periods of SPL but must allow a request for an uninterrupted continuous period.

"Thanks for your expertise in helping us win the case!"

Praise from a company after our Jenny Carpenter won a Tribunal hearing when claims of unfair dismissal and discrimination were rejected.

Written Statement

Setting out the basic terms of employment is a legal requirement. Failure to provide this information means employees can claim compensation of up to 4 weeks statutory pay. We can draft a statement or contract for you.

Please contact your nearest Adams Harrison Office;
Saffron Walden 01799 523441; Haverhill 01440 702485; Sawston 01223 832939