

Are you ready for the April employment law changes?

A raft of employment law changes will come into force in April 2024, including simple increases to statutory rates of pay, tweaks to existing employment rights and the introduction of brand new employment rights and practices. Our at-a-glance guide tells you what you need to know.

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
1 April 2024	National minimum wage	<p>The national minimum wage hourly rates will increase as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Living Wage (age 21): £11.44 (up from 10.42).• Age 18 – 20: £8.60 (up from £7.49).• Age 16 – 17 and Apprentices: £6.40 (up from £5.28).

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
<p>Holiday years commencing on or after 1 April 2024</p>	<p>Holiday accrual and pay You can read more about these changes here.</p>	<p>The position on accrual of annual leave and holiday pay will change for “irregular hours workers” and “part-year workers” only. These workers will accrue their annual leave entitlement at the end of each “pay period” at a rate of 12.07% of the number of hours worked in that pay period, up to a maximum of 28 days per year. Employers will also have the option of introducing a system of “rolled-up holiday pay” for irregular hours and part-year workers, but not for other types of workers.</p>

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
Notification of pregnancies or return dates on or after 6 April 2024	Redundancies You can read more about these changes here .	<p>Pregnant employees who are at risk of redundancy will have priority for any suitable alternative vacancy that is available. Employees returning to work from a period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave who are at risk of redundancy will have priority for any suitable alternative vacancy that is available. The additional protected period ends 18 months after the date of the child's birth or the day the child is placed with the employee for adoption. Only employees who have taken a period of shared parental leave of at least six consecutive weeks or more will qualify for protection.</p>

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
<p>Expected week of childbirth or adoption placement on or after 6 April 2024</p>	<p>Paternity leave You can read more about these changes here.</p>	<p>Eligible employees will have the option of taking their statutory paternity leave as either a single block of either one whole week or two consecutive whole weeks (as is currently the case), or as two separate blocks of one whole week. It remains the case that the leave must be taken as whole weeks and may not be split up into days. The period within which statutory paternity leave must be taken will increase from 56 days to 52 weeks from the birth or adoption placement. The notification requirements have also been relaxed, so that employees will only need give four weeks' notice of a proposed period of leave.</p>

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
6 April 2024	<p>Flexible working</p> <p>You can read more about these changes here.</p>	<p>The requirement for an employee to have 26 weeks' continuous service in order to make a flexible working request will be removed, making the right a Day 1 employment right. Later this year (on a date to be confirmed), the following changes will be made to the flexible working request process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees will no longer have to explain what effect they think the requested change would have on their employer and how that effect might be dealt with. • Employees will be permitted to make two flexible working requests per year rather than one. • Employers will be required to consult with employees before refusing requests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers will have two months to make a decision on a flexible working request (rather than three months as is currently the case) unless an extension is agreed.

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
6 April 2024	Carer's leave You can read more about these changes here .	<p>Employees will have a new Day 1 right to take at least one week's unpaid carer's leave in any 12-month rolling period to provide or arrange care for a dependant who has a long-term care need. Employees may take carer's leave in discontinuous blocks of at least half a working day. The leave can be taken at different times and need not be taken on consecutive days. Alternatively, the leave may be taken as a continuous block of one week's leave. In order to qualify for carer's leave, employees must also comply with certain notice requirements.</p>
6 April 2024	Compensation limits	<p>The maximum limits on compensation for certain purposes will increase as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum week's pay: £700 (up from £643). • Maximum basic award for unfair dismissal: £21,000 (up from £19,290). • Maximum compensatory award for unfair dismissal: £115,115 (up from £105,707). • Maximum statutory redundancy payment: £21,000 (up from £19,290).

DATE	AREA	CHANGE
6 April 2024	Statutory Sick Pay	The rate of statutory sick pay will increase to £116.75 per week (up from £109.40 per week).
7 April 2024	Statutory pay for family-related leave	The rate of statutory maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental and parental bereavement pay will increase to £184.03 per week (up from £172.48 per week).

BDBF is a law firm based at Bank in the City of London specialising in employment law. If you would like to discuss any issues relating to the content of this article, please contact Principal Knowledge Lawyer Amanda Steadman (amandasteadman@bdbf.co.uk) or your usual BDBF contact.