



ActifHR

Where people matter...

April 2021 Update

Welcome to this month's update - where we discuss the latest guidance and legislation.

In this Edition we report on:

- April 2021 increases to National Minimum Wage and other payments
 - Why Employers should value age diversity
 - Businesses are now more aware of menopause-related burnout
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April 2021 increases to National Minimum Wage and other payments

The National Minimum Wage has increased from 1 April 2021 as follows:

- * For 21-22-year olds, from £8.20 to £8.36 (up by 2%).
- * For 18-20-year olds, from £6.45 to £6.56 (up by 1.7%).
- * under 18 years, from £4.55 to £4.62 (up by 1.5%).

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) has increased from £94.25 to £96.35 each week for eligible employees.

Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Shared Parental Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Bereavement Pay have all increased from £148.68 to £151.97 each week.

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The cap for a week's pay for a statutory redundancy payment has increased from £538 to £544 per week. This means that the maximum statutory redundancy payment for 20 years' service or over is £16,320.

This amount is also the maximum Basic Award in an unfair dismissal claim, which awards length of service but not any compensatory award.

Employers: make sure that you review employees' pay scales, particularly young people when they reach 21 years.

Contact us: for specialist HR advice and guidance, including contracts of employment and policies

Why Employers should value age diversity

When it comes to diversity, we tend to look at gender and ethnicity; but age is also important to ensure an inclusive and effective workplace. According to recent research, businesses with supportive workplaces for older staff see improved productivity, as well as a whole host of other benefits.

Almost a third of the UK's workforce is now aged 50 and over, reflecting a steady rise over two decades in the employment rate of older workers. According to statistics, almost three-quarters of people aged 50-64 were in work in 2020, which is compared with just 56 per cent in 1984.

The recent pandemic has taken its toll, with 175,000 more people aged 50-64 out of work since March 2020 and more than 640,000 over-55s still on furlough leave. This is concerning as older workers who lose their jobs are twice as likely to become long-term unemployed.

When job-hunting later in life, older workers face plenty of obstacles including health issues, a lack of access to retraining and ageism. Without positive steps in place there is the possibility of an unemployment crisis among older workers that may force many into poverty in retirement.

With the state pension age rising to 67 in years to come, many more people will have to keep in work through necessity, rather than choice. Employers and business leaders have an

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opportunity to look at ways to make jobs better for older workers and recognise the productivity benefits of multigenerational teams.

After all, older workers:

- Bring experience
- Create a balanced workforce
- Are loyal and trustworthy
- Can mentor younger members
- Improve staff retention rates
- Increase staff morale
- Enable effective skill transfer

So next time you are recruiting, don't fall into the trap of believing older people are "overpaid" and can be "replaced with younger workers" who can do the job just as well. Evidence disputes this. Evidently knowledge and expertise — the main predictors of job performance — can increase beyond retirement age.

So, for a happier, more successful and balanced business, isn't it time that you reaped the benefits of being an age-friendly employer

Employers: for a happier and balanced business look at the value older workers can bring.

Contact us: we can help your business with reviews of staff structures, contract documentation and policies.

Businesses are now more aware of menopause-related burnout

The perimenopause affects a huge proportion of the workforce and employers should consider what support they have in place. With mental health issues a key issue in the pandemic, it is good to have a constructive conversation about a concern for many women: the menopause.

Perimenopause is experienced by women as they approach menopause. It's estimated that 25 per cent of women are in perimenopause by the time they reach 40 years of age.

Many companies are putting in place support mechanisms, including training managers to be able to assist in dealing with these issues. A positive, well-communicated strategy to support women going through this stage in their lives is vital for performance and mental health.

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When managers do not understand or lack training this can lead to unconscious bias, stereotyping and misinformation. Although with the right support and processes in place, this can be a positive time for women.

Employers: managers that understand how to read the signs are better able to intervene early and help with the right kind of support.

Contact us: we can assist with a menopause policy and support for your team.



Caroline has a wealth of experience supporting business clients with practical hands on HR and Employment Law advice. Caroline's pragmatic approach helps businesses of all sizes deal with complex HR situations. She qualified as a Solicitor in 1999 and now acts as a specialist Human Resource / employment Law Consultant to business.

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