



This Week in Employment Law

Sexual harassment law enforcement in action

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have announced that they have entered into a legal agreement with Lidl after it failed to comply with sexual harassment laws.

- The agreement follows a tribunal case in 2023 where it was found that Lidl failed to take steps to prevent the sexual harassment of a young female colleague. She was awarded over £50,000 in compensation.
- It was highlighted that there was no evidence of risk assessments, staff training or awareness of harassment and equality policies.
- Sexual harassment laws apply to every single business, regardless of size or industry. This includes the new duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment that came into force in October 2024.
- Under the agreement with the EHRC, Lidl has committed to a series of preventative measures highlighting the lengths the EHRC will go to enforce the new duty.

Croner can provide an entire toolkit on preventing sexual harassment including guidance, forms, checklists and templates. Our Croner Face2face team can provide in-person training on how to prevent sexual harassment. You can also ask Croner [BrAInbox What do I need to do to comply with the new sexual harassment laws?](#)

Employer confidence remains low, says CIPD

HR

The CIPD's latest quarterly labour market data has found that the rise in costs this year has added pressure to employer confidence, which remains low and has seen little change since its last report. Private sector hiring intentions are subdued, with just 57% planning to recruit in the next three months. Pay expectations have remained the same for five quarters at 3%. The CIPD reports that lower-paying sectors and those employing young workers are being hit the hardest by rising employment costs. With youth employment falling, the CIPD recommends that employers invest in young people as a long-term workforce strategy to build a future talent pipeline.

Did you know?

Our HR Advisory Team are here 24/7 365 days/year to guide you on hiring young workers.

Company fined after failure to manage asbestos risk

H&S

A Manchester based construction company has been fined following failures to manage asbestos risks during work at the former Unicorn Public House on Liverpool Road. An inspection by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that asbestos insulating board has been removed from a lift shaft without proper checks and work later resumed without a full asbestos survey being carried out. The company pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(6) of The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. It was fined £5,360 and ordered to pay £5,117. This case underlines the need for contractors to ensure asbestos is properly identified, managed and documented.

Did you know?

Croner offers a 24/7 H&S advice line, where our accredited H&S advisers can support with H&S concerns.

Claimant wins racial harassment claim

HR

The claimant, who is black, worked for the respondent in their warehouse. Prior to the claimant starting work with the respondent, one of their employees was unhappy with their pay and work levels and had taken to drawing graffiti around the warehouse that said "slave". The respondent became aware of this and removed any graffiti that they found. However, the claimant won his claim for harassment related to race after he uncovered a single graffiti hidden behind a piece of machinery that the respondent had failed to notice. The tribunal was critical of the workplace culture the employer had allowed to develop. (Fofana v Window Widgets Ltd).

Did you know?

Our Legal Services department can represent your business in Employment Tribunal claims.

Heat stress and UK workplace safety: a growing challenge

H&S

Employers must manage heat stress. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires you to assess thermal stress as a workplace risk, as it can cause dizziness, fatigue, cramps, heatstroke, hospitalisation, or fatalities if not addressed promptly. High risk staff include construction, warehouse, kitchen, factory, and transport workers. Heat stress reduces productivity, concentration, reaction time, and increases accident and injury risk. Conduct risk assessments, particularly during heatwaves, and introduce working patterns that avoid peak heat. Ensure regular breaks in cooler areas and provide cold drinking water, fans, and air conditioning where feasible. Supply lightweight uniforms or PPE that allow heat to dissipate.

Did you know?

You should have emergency arrangements in place to recognise and respond to signs of heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

Please contact the 24 hour advice service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.