



The biggest HR changes for 2026!

Date: 17th December 2025

Run Time: Approximately 50 minutes

This session will start shortly (14:30)





The detail contained within this webinar is based on GB & Northern Ireland employment legislation.

Members in the jurisdictions of the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man are asked to please contact the Advice Service to obtain the information relevant to your jurisdiction.



Today We Will Cover

- **The critical HR updates over the past 12 months**
- **What to expect next year and how to prepare**
- **If your business meets the latest employment law legislation**

Context

- Whilst a lot of the focus of the past year has been on the progression of the Employment Rights Bill – there have been several key changes/updates in the world of HR
- It's important to take the time to ensure these have been implemented successfully and compliantly ahead of more change coming in 2026.



Employment Rights Bill

- Unfair dismissal protection
- SSP reforms
- Day-one right to paternity and parental leave
- Establishment of FWA
- Restrictions on fire and rehire
- Enhanced harassment and sexual harassment obligations
- Duty to inform of right to join a trade union
- Extra rights and protections for trade union reps and those taking industrial action
- Enhanced access rights for trade unions
- Extension of tribunal claim time limits
- And more?



2025 Tribunal **Statistics**

The total number of open employment tribunal claims sat at **45,000** at the end of March – this is an increase of **32%** on the same time last year.



Poll: How prepared do you feel for the Employment Rights Bill?

Rolled Up Holiday Pay

2025 is first leave year that employers with a January-December leave year can use new holiday entitlement calculation method and rolled up holiday pay

Applies to part year and irregular hours workers only

Stems from *Harpur Trust* case

Neonatal Care **Leave**

Brand-new employment right –
available to eligible employees
from day one of employment



Supreme Court **ruling**

Back in April, the Supreme Court ruled, in *For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers*, that for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the terms “man”, “woman” and “sex” refer only to biological sex.

Importantly, the ruling does not remove protection from discrimination for transgender people. Gender reassignment is still a protected characteristic.



Poll: How confident are you that your organisation can implement the new employment law changes?



Immigration reforms

Back in May, the Government released a white paper on restoring control of the immigration system.



Digital IDs & Self-employed right to work checks

- You may have seen the announcement that Digital IDs will be introduced in the UK which will be compulsory for anyone who wants to work in the UK.
- The government has committed to these being in place by the end of the current Parliament (2029), but they will be subject to further consultation.





HR1 Forms

When employers are proposing to make 20 or more employees redundant from one establishment, they must complete an HR1 form to notify the Government.

From 1 December, only digital forms accepted.

Early conciliation

From 1 December 2025, the maximum period for early conciliation increased from 6 weeks to maximum 12 weeks.

Reforms to non-compete clauses

The Government has published a working paper on options for reform to non-compete clauses in employment contracts.

Autumn 2025 budget announcements

Lots to unpack from the budget but the biggest HR news outside of the NMW is around apprenticeships and youth employment



National Living/Minimum Wage

	2025-2026 (Current)	2026-2027	Increase
NLW 21+	£12.21	£12.71	4.1%
NMW 18–20-year-old rate	£10	£10.85	8.5%
NMW 16–17-year-old rate	£7.55	£8	6%
NMW apprentice rate	£7.55	£8	6%
Accommodation offset	£10.66	£11.10	4.1%

Unfair Dismissal rights - Government U-turn

- Employment Rights Bill was introduced with a headline measure of day-one unfair dismissal rights
- This was a Government manifesto commitment
- Opposition was fierce from businesses, business groups, and the House of Lords
- After weeks of back and to, last Thursday the Government finally announced they would back down



A six-month qualifying period will be required to claim ordinary unfair dismissal

Did you know...

Reducing the qualifying period from two-years to six-months will see 6,000,000 extra people gain the right to claim unfair dismissal

What does this mean for you?

- On the face of it, it's good news, not only is it some clarity, it's what many have been calling for
However...
- Speculation and question over what this means for the 'initial period of employment'
- Government have said they will consult further on the details and implementation of this reform
- Either way, as we have known from the Bill's introduction, employers will still need to focus on recruitment, probation periods, and effective management of their new employees
- This is not a get out clause - six months is significantly less than the current two-year period in place and employers could easily find themselves unstuck



What happens now?

- The Employment Rights Bill is still not law
- The next debate will take place in the House of Commons on 8th December
- Here the Government will formally accept the six-month qualifying period but may reject other amendments by the House of Lords
- Likely to then head back to the House of Lords where the Government hopes this compromise will convince the Lords to pass the Bill.
- Could this be pre-Christmas?



Did you know...

- When this happens, the Bill will become the Employment Rights Act 2025 / 2026
- However, 173 further pieces of legislation will be required to bring the Act into effect in full

Roadmap for Delivering Change

- Rationale for making the concession on unfair dismissal was to allow for the Government to be able to stick to their roadmap for the other reforms in the Bill.
- Crucially, those that are due to come into effect in April 2026, these include:
- Making Statutory Sick Pay payable from day-one of absence, regardless of usual earnings
- Removing the service requirement for paternity and unpaid parental leave





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Thank you!

Any questions



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