

The April 2013 employment law changes

The government is planning to make a number of changes to employment law in the near future.

The key changes which will affect employers include:

Increases in statutory payment rates

Statutory payments go up every April at the start of the new tax year. For the next three years they are limited to a one per cent increase. From 6 April statutory sick pay will be £86.70 per week. Statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay go up on the first Sunday in April so, from 7 April, they will be £136.78 per week.

Increase in parental leave

From 8 March parents will be able to take a maximum of 18 weeks unpaid parental leave per child, rather than 13 weeks. Parents will still be able to take a maximum of four weeks leave per year.

Whistle-blowing claims

At the moment, if a worker makes a qualifying disclosure in good faith about a dangerous or illegal act or omission, then as a whistle-blower they will be protected from being dismissed or being treated worse than other employees. From 6 April, the disclosure will also have to be in the

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public interest, but will no longer have to be made in good faith. Whistle-blowers will also gain protection from bullying or harassment by co-workers.

Other changes include:

- plans to introduce new rules of procedure for employment tribunals in April;
- a possible increase in discrimination awards for injury to feelings in discrimination claims;
- a consultation on collective redundancy;
- introduction of a new employee shareholder status, where employees can take shares and, in return, would give up various employment rights
- proposed changes to the Equality Act relating to third party harassment.

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Contact us

Ware & Kay's specialist, Gill Wilkinson, has extensive experience in all aspects of employment law. Contact her on 01904 716000 or gillian.wilkinson@warekay.co.uk.

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