



# October 2008 Employment Law Update

## :: Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) (Amendment) Regulations 2008

From October 2008, agency workers on contracts of less than 3 months will be entitled to statutory sick pay. For more advice on how this will affect your agency workers contact your HR Consultant.

## :: Maternity Leave - Terms and Conditions of Employment

The increase in entitlements to benefits for employees on additional maternity or adoption leave will be effective for employees with an expected week of childbirth on or after 5 October 2008 and those with a child expected to be placed with them for adoption on or after this date. Employers will now need to ensure that they provide all of the non-remuneration terms and conditions of employment that would have applied if they had not been absent.

## :: National Minimum Wage

From 1 October 2008 National Minimum Wage rates will increase to:

- :: Adult Workers rate (aged 22+) to £5.73
- :: Development Rate for 18-21 year olds to £4.77
- :: Development Rate for 16-17 year olds to £3.53

## :: More Flexible Working

The Government has announced in a recently published consultation document that it will be extending flexible working rights in April next year. The right to request flexible working is likely to be extended to parents of children up to the age of 16 in the same way that it applies to parents of children aged under 6, disabled children under 18 and employees with caring responsibilities. If implemented this will potentially further increase the number of flexible working requests received.

### **HR Alert**

On average sickness absence cost employers £666 per employee every year. To find out how your business can reduce the cost of absence and increase productivity call your HR Consultant. Can you afford not to?

Source: CIPD

### **Restructuring & Redundancy**

With the current economic conditions, many companies are considering the need for restructuring and redundancy programmes. This is a complex area and we advise employers to:

- *Plan what you are trying to achieve in advance and have a suitable procedure in place.*
- *Allow adequate time for consultation and start the process early.*
- *Communicate with employees throughout and make yourself available to discuss any queries or concerns they may have.*
- *Ensure your selection criteria do not discriminate against any groups of employees.*
- *Remember the 3 step dismissal procedure and the right to be accompanied.*

**For more advice and guidance on managing redundancies contact:**



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