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UPDATE

What follows a New Year ?....Employment Law changes and updates.

Below is a brief overview of what is changing in 2022 and what other changes may happen but have no confirmed dates. Good practice will be to start preparing for the changes as soon as practically possible.

April 2022

From the 6th of April 2022, Rights to work and DBS checks will be moving digitally. The government has made these checks permanent.

For more information on this see the link below
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-identity-document-validation-technology-idvt>

From 5th April 2022, There will be an increase in the national living/minimum wage rates.

	Current rate	Rate from April 2022
National Living Wage	£8.91	£9.50
21-22 Year old	£8.36	£9.18
18-20 Year old	£6.56	£6.83
16-17 Year old	£4.62	£4.81
Apprentice Rate	£4.30	£4.81

From 3rd April 2022, Statutory maternity, adoption, shared parental, paternity and parental bereavement pay will increase from £151.97 to £156.66 per week

From 6th April 2022, Statutory sick pay will increase from £95.35 per week to £99.35 per week.

June 2022

To celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee, the late May bank holiday, which normally would have fallen on the 30th May 2022, will be moved to Thursday 2nd June and there will be an additional bank holiday on Friday 3rd June 2022.

Employment Bills has that been announced and are expected to be passed in 2022

The introduction to neonatal leave and pay for parents of babies who need neonatal care.

The extension of the redundancy protection period for team members on maternity leave to up to six months after they return

Changes to harassment laws, including extension to the time period for raising tribunal claims. There is also enhanced protection against harassment from third parties, such as clients, customers etc.

Carers leave, Government are yet to announce an implementation date, but team members may have a day one right of up to 5 days unpaid leave per year to provide care to someone who has a long term care need.

If you would like further and more detailed information about the upcoming changes, please get in touch with the Apex team, who will be happy to support and guide you through this.



Job flexibility as a retention and acquisition strategy

Many businesses are currently struggling to recruit. Therefore, the focus needs to be on retaining existing talent in your company and becoming an employer of choice to attract new talent. One of the most impactful ways of doing this is to offer people job flexibility. Here's why in a nutshell:

The EY 2021 Work Reimagined Employee Survey found that nine in ten employees want flexibility in where and when they work.

2021 FlexJobs Survey found that 65% of respondents want to become full-time remote employees post-pandemic, while 31% would prefer a hybrid work arrangement. 73% said that they had a better work-life balance thanks to working at home.

30% of respondents have already requested to continue their remote work arrangement post-pandemic—and have been approved. Another 27% of workers said that the ability to work at home as much as they want is so important to them that they are willing to take a 10% to 20% pay cut to have that benefit.

81% of survey respondents say they would be more loyal to their employer if they had flexible work options.

37% of respondents said that they miss “nothing” about the office, and only 4% would prefer to return to the traditional office full-time.

Amicus Survey Report findings posed the question “Will Flexible Working Be Non-Negotiable in 2022?” as survey data indicates that lack of flexible working is a deal-breaker for many; 79% of those who have stated that they don't currently have their ideal working conditions, said they are currently considering, or are possibly considering, a career move to achieve those goals. 41% said that they would not consider a job in the future if remote working wasn't an option. 32% said they would “possibly” consider a job under those circumstances.

Respondents were also asked to highlight any applicable key benefits they've enjoyed while working remotely:-

- Saving money on commuting – 83%
- Enhanced work/life balance – 73%
- Spending more time with the family – 61%
- Taking up new hobbies/pursuits – 40%
- Easing childcare challenges – 26%
- Opportunity to change place of residence – 25%

Whilst some employers may be apprehensive to promote job flexibility due to concerns over productivity, 82% of respondents said that their productivity levels have remained the same – or increased – while working from home.

The findings of these (and many other similar surveys) speak for themselves; if we want to retain existing team members and attract new talent, job flexibility is one of the most significant ways to go!

Organisations can claim money back to cover sick pay caused by COVID

The cost of covering sick pay is potentially very high for businesses in the Omicron wave; transmissibility is high, and a lot of organisations are struggling with employee absence. A lot of organisations cannot afford to cover high levels of employee absence whilst running at reduced capacity, especially after the impact of the rest of the pandemic.

The treasury is subsequently reintroducing the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme that ended in September 2021.

The Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme states: that businesses with fewer than 250 employees can be reimbursed Statutory Sick Pay for COVID related absences, for up to two weeks per employee. Businesses can also make retrospective claims from mid-January.

Employees must be off for more than four days to qualify for traditional SSP, this rebate however, will cover every day the employee is self-isolating.

Self-employed individuals will not be entitled to the scheme, but it will be open to both casual and agency workers.