

Six-month snapshot 2026

UK EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENTS

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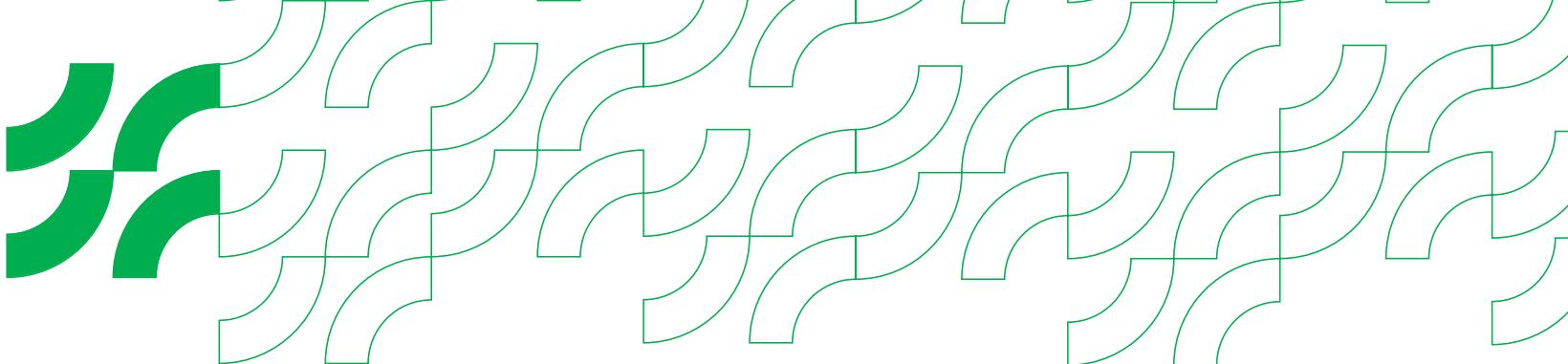
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This calendar has been prepared with reference to the UK Government's Employment Rights Bill Implementation Roadmap published in July 2025. Since the Employment Rights Act 2025 has come into force, the Government has confirmed its ongoing commitment to the Roadmap's implementation timelines.

This calendar is for general guidance only and does not contain definitive advice.

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January

25

Review recruitment practices and probationary period clauses in light of the reduced six-month qualifying period for unfair dismissal which will apply from January 2027.

Review and update whistleblowing policies to reflect sexual harassment becoming a standalone qualifying disclosure in April 2026.

Review paternity leave policies to reflect changes that came into force in December 2025 which apply in bereavement circumstances.

01

Mandatory application of revised FCA and PRA bankers' remuneration rules for banks with calendar performance years.

15

Government consultations on bereavement leave and enhanced dismissal protection for pregnant workers and new mothers close.

February

Review and update sickness absence policies to reflect upcoming changes to SSP eligibility this April.

Expect consultations on various Employment Rights Act 2025 measures, including trade union reform, collective redundancy reform, flexible working changes and zero/low hours contract protections.

March

Simplification of union recognition processes and workplace balloting starts this April. Prepare to deal with queries from staff and union reps.

Fair Work Agency to be established.

01

From October, employers must prevent third-party harassment of employees across all protected characteristics. Plan ahead. Identify third parties who interact with your staff (customers, clients or suppliers) and ensure appropriate contract and policy wording is in place.

08

International Women's Day.

17–23

Neurodiversity celebration week.

April

Some Employment Rights Act 2025 provisions will take effect, including "day one" paternity leave and parental leave rights, changes to SSP entitlement, whistleblowing protections and simplification of union recognition and workplace balloting processes.

Plan your strategy on how to address unions' enhanced rights to workplace access, which take effect in October 2026.

Prepare for the enhanced duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of staff, coming into force in October 2026.

01

National Living Wage for workers aged 21 and over will increase from GBP12.21 to GBP12.71. The national minimum wage for those aged 18–20 will increase from GBP10.00 to GBP10.85. Apprentices and 16–17-year-olds will see an increase from GBP7.55 to GBP8.00.

06

New statutory rates for SSP and family leave pay will increase from GBP187.18 to GBP194.32.

May

Plan your strategy on how to address unions' enhanced rights to workplace access, which take effect in October 2026.

Prepare for the enhanced duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of staff, coming into force in October 2026.

11

FIFA World Cup kicks off in Mexico.

08–14

Men's Health Week.

Employers already complying with the current duty and regularly reviewing risk assessments should find this straightforward.

11–17

Mental Health Awareness Week.

June

Pride month.

Consider practicalities of meeting new employer duty to inform workers of their right to join a trade union, coming into force this October 2026.

08–14

Men's Health Week.

Men's Health Week.