

## Employee Rights

### • Safe working environment

Employers must provide welfare facilities and a working environment that's healthy and safe for everyone in the workplace, including those with disabilities.

You must have:

- **welfare facilities** – the right number of toilets and washbasins, drinking water and having somewhere to rest and eat meals
- **a healthy working environment** – a clean workplace with a reasonable working temperature, good ventilation, suitable lighting and the right amount of space and seating
- **a safe workplace** – well-maintained equipment, with no obstructions in floors and traffic routes, and windows that can be easily opened and cleaned

### • Training

Staff training legal requirements are one of the most important forms of training that an organisation can conduct. It's essential for staff to understand the many different regulations and legislations that govern their job and the business that they work for. Conducting some form of legal requirement training is usually required by the government. Not only does it allow employees to understand their rights and responsibilities, but it also helps the business to reduce liability in the case of any mistakes made by the staff.

### • Rest Periods

By law (The Working Time Regulations 1998), employees and workers have the right to the following rest:

- during the working day – 20-minute rest break if they're expected to work more than 6 hours during the day
- between working days – 11 hours' rest between finishing work and starting work
- between working weeks – 24 hours every 7 working days or 48 hours every 14 working days
- each year – holiday entitlement

### • Holidays

Statutory annual leave entitlement

Most workers who work a 5-day week must receive at least 28 days' paid annual leave a year. This is the equivalent of 5.6 weeks of holiday.

Working part-time

Part-time workers are entitled to at least 5.6 weeks' paid holiday, but this will amount to fewer than 28 days.

For example, if they work 3 days a week, they must get at least 16.8 days' leave a year (3 × 5.6).

### • Minimum wage

By law, your employer must pay a minimum amount on average for the hours you work. This is called the:

- National Living Wage (NLW) if you're aged 23 or over
- National Minimum Wage (NMW) if you're aged under 23 or an apprentice

The government reviews minimum wage rates every year and they're usually updated in April.

#### Current rates

Age 23 or over (National Living Wage)	£10.42
Age 21 to 22	£10.18
Age 18 to 20	£7.49
Under 18	£5.28
Apprentice	£5.28

**• Contract of employment**

The contract of employment is the agreement between the business and employee, and specifies the employment relationship. The contract does not have to be written down for a contract of employment to exist; however, it is worth having written copies..

Terms in a contract of employment include:

- Employment conditions
- Rights
- Responsibilities
- Duties

**Employee responsibilities****• Punctuality**

Regular attendance and punctuality are vital attributes for all employees. It is important for employees to attend work regularly and to arrive at work on time, because failure to do so detrimentally affects employee morale and productivity. Absenteeism or tardiness that is excessive or unauthorised in the judgment of the Employer is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**• Safety of self and others**

Workers have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions at work. Workers must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements .

As a worker, if you have specific queries or concerns relating to health and safety in your workplace, talk to your employer, manager/supervisor or a health and safety representative.

**• Maintain the working environment**

An employer will provide suitable and sufficient equipment for their staff to use to complete their work activities in a safe manner. An employee must not interfere with or misuse anything that's been provided for their health, safety or welfare. An example of this would be using fire extinguishers at an office party to spray their colleagues as a joke, or adapting cable extension leads to hold more leads than is safe.

**• Following instructions and completing tasks set**

Part of your responsibilities as an employee is to follow any instructions you are given and stick to them.

This involves undergoing any training that is set and to make sure it's done properly, as well as following any rules and regulations that are put in place for the company.

Failure to do so could lead in injury to yourself or others or you may risk losing your job.

