

February 2017 Newsletter

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A new year brings new legislation - what legal changes are we likely to see in 2017?

Salary Sacrifice Schemes - access to such schemes is reducing from April, although protection will remain for childcare vouchers, cycle to work, low emission cars and pensions. Employers are advised to speak to their accountant about the impact of the changes, and also may need to reconsider flexible benefits options as part of their employees' total reward package.

National wage rates - the National Minimum wage rates for workers aged 24 and younger will increase from April from now on (previously October), which brings them into line with National Living Wage. See the sidebar for current rates and the April increase.

Immigration Skills Charges - from April employers who sponsor a migrant worker for a Tier 2 visa will be required to pay an 'immigration skills charge' of £1,000 per migrant, per year, with a reduced rate applying to small businesses and charities. There will be exemptions for PhD-level roles and international graduates switching from a student visa, as well as intra company transfer graduate trainees.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting - employers with more than 250 employees will be required to publish an annual report on employee pay and bonus pay, as well as data on gender distribution, with the first report due by April 2018.

Brexit – the process to leave the EU is progressing and yet there is still a huge amount of detail to be debated, including the impact on UK employment law. Our [previous briefing on Brexit](#) still stands, and we will update when there is more to report.

Self employment / workers - the UBER case which determined that a number of self-employed drivers were, in fact, employees is going through an appeal. We are keeping an eye on



It's February already!

January is the longest month in the calendar and is a great time to review priorities for the year ahead.

In this newsletter we examine the big HR Legal issues for 2017, as well as employers obligations in cold weather (just as we head into another cold snap!).

We'd love to hear from you if you have any HR needs arising from issues in this newsletter, or if there are any HR issues we can help with.

Julie and Antonia

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**About Green Light
HR Solutions**

this landmark case and will update when the appeal has been considered.

Introduction to Coaching Skills Training

We are re-running our popular course on 11 and 12 May in Leeds!

Learn and practice the fundamental skills of coaching and enhance your ability to manage performance, motivate and empower your staff and colleagues.

[CLICK HERE for full info and to book](#)

Typically, just as we're approaching Spring the temperature plummets and we're back into Winter!

What are employer's obligations in poor weather conditions?

There is **no legal minimum outdoor** working temperature so in extreme cold temperatures the employer must carry out risk assessments and ensure that clothing is protective and adequate. Guidance is available from [HSE](#).

Inside the office, [HSE](#) recommend that workplaces should be a minimum of 16 degrees celsius, or 13 degrees if the work is physical.

What about if employees can't attend work due to bad weather?

There is no automatic right to paid time off for bad weather. Depending on the nature of the role employers may be able to allow some flexibility, eg, making up hours another day, or to work from home. We advise that employers keep a note of any such arrangements in order to treat employees consistently and maintain good relationships. If the weather forecasters are predicting bad weather it may be worth sending out an email with your stance on the matter.

Green Light HR Solutions is a North Leeds based HR Consultancy run by Antonia Nicholls and Julie Shimmin. We have experience of working with small businesses and understand the people management challenges you face on a day-to-day basis.

Julie and Antonia are fully CIPD Qualified with, between us, over 30 years experience of working in HR and managing staff in both the public and private sector. All the work is performed by us. Our rates are competitive and we are keen to extend our client base. We are a small outfit who take pride in getting to know our clients and provide a high quality and bespoke service.

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Statutory Entitlements: January 2017
(qualifying criteria apply)

Statutory Maternity, Shared Parental Leave, Paternity and Adoption Pay: £139.56 per week.

Statutory Sick Pay: £88.45 per week for up to 28 weeks.

The National Living Wage (NLW) from 1 April 2016 (*April 2017*):
Workers aged 25 and over: £7.20 (£7.50)

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) from 1 October 2016 (*April 2017*):
Workers aged 21 to 24 years: £6.95 (£7.05)
Workers aged 18-20: £5.55 (£5.60)
Under 18: £4.00 (£4.05)
Apprentice: £3.40* (£3.50)

If the office is closed at short notice because of unforeseen circumstances, such as heavy snowfall, and there is no work available for your employees as a result, an employer cannot usually withhold pay as such a deduction could once again amount to an unauthorised deduction from wages.

*This rate is for [apprentices](#) aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the NMW for their age.

If you have any queries regarding these, or any other, areas please get in touch for our advice and guidance.



Click here to see [our previous newsletters](#)

We'd love to receive your feedback and thoughts on anything you'd like to see in future issues- info@gl-hrsolutions.co.uk

Please forward our newsletter to anyone you feel may be interested, or they can sign up via our website www.gl-hrsolutions.co.uk

If you have any questions on any of the issues above or any other employment or staffing matter please get in touch;

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Antonia and Julie

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Our Expertise,
Combined Solutions**

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