

This Week in Employment Law

Government progresses minimum wage reforms

The Government has taken the next steps to deliver its manifesto pledges to reform the National Minimum Wage by removing the 'discriminatory' age bands and creating a single adult rate.

- The Government has set out the new remit for the Low Pay Commission (LPC) when recommending National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage rates that will apply from April 2026.
- The LPC will consult with employers on narrowing the gap between the 18-20-year-old rate of the National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage (currently payable to those aged 21 and over) and will put forward recommendations on moving to a single adult rate.
- The Government says it has put the cost of living at the heart of the LPC's new remit. The cost of living was first included in the LPC's remit last year, benefitting around 3 million workers.
- The LPC will recommend the new rates for April 2026 to the Government in October, which are usually accepted by the Government.

Our HR Advisory Team are here 24/7 365 days a year to advise on your minimum wage queries. You can also ask [Croner BrAIinbox What is the current National Minimum Wage?](#) and [Do trial shifts need National Minimum Wage?](#)

Calls to extend protection for disabled workers

HR

A report by the Resolution Foundation is calling for new protections for disabled workers returning from sick leave. Key recommendations in the report include introducing a brand-new 'right to reintegration' to reintegrate existing disabled workers back into work from sickness absence. If this new right is implemented, employers would not be able to dismiss workers unless they can demonstrate that they have made sufficient efforts at reintegration. The report aims to incentivise employers to create more opportunities for disabled people. The Government has been consulting on how to introduce mandatory disability pay reporting for large employers.

Did you know?

Our partner, Health Assured can carry out occupational health assessments for your employees.

Firm fined £40K after apprentice loses thumb

H&S

A construction company has been fined £40,000 after an 18-year-old apprentice was seriously injured while working on a renovation project. The apprentice's thumb was severed when it came into contact with a portable table saw while he tried to clear debris from the saw blade with his left hand, his thumb touched the rotating blade and was severed. Colleagues acted quickly and the thumb was later reattached during surgery. Although successful, the injury has left him with permanent swelling, limited movement, and sensitivity. An investigation revealed that the company had failed to provide adequate training, supervision, and safety measures for the task.

Did you know?

Croner offers a 24/7 H&S advice line, where our accredited H&S advisers can support with H&S concerns.

Travel time to workplace did not attract minimum wage

HR

The employer's business supplied workers on zero-hours contracts to work in the poultry industry. It provided transport for its staff to and from their homes to farms at various locations around the country. HMRC decided that the workers should be paid National Minimum Wage (NMW) for the time spent travelling to the first assignment of the day and returning home from the last one. However, the Court of Appeal found that time spent travelling to a place of work is not "time worked" for the purposes of National Minimum Wage, even when the travel arrangements are at the control of the employer and involved travelling long distances. (HMRC v Taylors Services Ltd).

Did you know?

Our legal team can represent your business in Employment Tribunal Claims.

How to undertake gas safety checks in the workplace

H&S

Workplace gas systems can pose serious risks. Compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR). Only qualified personnel should install, maintain, or repair gas appliances. Failure risks carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, prosecution, imprisonment, and heavy fines. Regular inspections are essential. Poorly maintained boilers may produce CO2, risking worker health. Keep written records and Gas Safe certificates for all servicing and maintenance. Carry out risk assessments under the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1999 as amended, including for LPG and natural gas installations. Provide clearly displayed emergency shut-off valves and instructions, with staff briefed on gas leak procedures.

Did you know?

LPG tanks and cylinders must be stored in well-ventilated areas, with structural and stability evaluations recorded.

Please contact the 24 hour advice service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.