

Employment, Immigration and Commercial

April updates

April is often a busy month for developments in the law. Here is a summary of some key updates you can expect to see this month:

Employment

- From 1 April 2019, the national living wage will increase to £8.21 per hour for those aged over 25 and the national minimum wage per hour will increase as follows: £7.70 for 21-24 year olds; £6.15 for 18-20 year olds; £4.35 for under 18s; and £3.90 for apprentices.
- From 7 April 2019 Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Shared Parental Pay will increase from £145.18 to £148.68 per week.
- From 6 April 2019 Statutory Sick Pay will increase from £92.05 to £94.25 per week.
- From 6 April 2019 workers will have the right to a payslip. Also payslips must include additional information for individuals whose pay varies depending on the hours they have worked.
- Employers that dismiss employees for redundancy must pay those with two years' service an amount based on the employee's weekly pay, length of service and age. From 6 April 2019 the upper limit on weekly pay has been increased to £525.
- The next date for private-sector companies regarding gender pay gap reporting is 4 April 2019. If you employ more than 250 people on that date then you will need to produce a report.



Immigration

- A modest increase in the fee for priority entry clearance visa applications overseas, the new fee from 29 March will be £220 per person (up from £212).
- Significant fee rise for in-country (i.e. extension/switching applications) priority service applications, the new fee for the 24 hour "super priority" service (this has replaced the previous "same-day" service), which will now be £800 per person (up from £610). The 10 working days "priority" service will now be £500 per person (up from £477). Both these changes take effect from 29 March 2019.
- No other fee increases have been indicated at this stage, which is unusual for April as we normally see at least inflationary rises.
- Some increases have been made to the minimum salaries across different occupations - these will only affect migrants making an application (e.g. entry clearance/extension); the salary increases do not have to be reflected in migrants' existing packages.

Brexit

- Pending the passing of a withdrawal agreement or some other legislative or executive process, the UK has until 12 April to decide its next steps. If no decision is made by that date then the UK will not be prepared for the upcoming European elections, and a no-deal Brexit is then becoming increasingly likely.

Commercial

- Large private companies will have to prepare a Section 172 Statement at the end of each of its financial years that begins after January 2019. The statement explains how the directors have acted to promote the success of the company, as per their responsibilities in section 172 of the Companies Act. All companies which meet 2 of the qualifying criteria (which are having more than 250 employees, £36 million or more in turnover, and £18 million or more in balance sheet assets) will be required to produce the statement, which should be published on the company's website.

For more information please contact one of our legal teams.

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