

# On your radar: The Employment Rights Bill

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The UK Government has published its new Employment Rights Bill. Consultation is expected to commence in 2025, with the majority of changes unlikely to take effect before 2026. A Fair Work Agency will be established to enforce workers' rights and provide guidance to employers. Key proposals include:

## Family friendly rights

Flexible working (where 'practicable') and other family leave will be day one rights. Changes may take effect before 2026. Enhanced protection for pregnant women and new mothers includes protection from dismissal for six months after returning to work. Bereavement leave is to be introduced.

## Statutory sick pay reforms

SSP to be claimed from the first day of sickness, and the lower earnings limit will be removed. Changes may take effect before 2026.

## Industrial relations

Various restrictions on industrial action are to be repealed, and trade union rights strengthened.

## Day one unfair dismissal

Implementation will not be before **Autumn 2026**. A maximum statutory probation period of nine months is also proposed and will be the subject of consultation.

## Protection from harassment

Employers to take **all** reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment. Protection from harassment at work by third parties is to be reintroduced.

## Zero hours contracts

Guaranteed contractual hours, for zero-hours workers who work regular hours over a defined period, and rights to reasonable notice of shifts and changes.

## What else is on the horizon?

A number of proposals sit outside the Bill, and include longer-term goals.

## Single status of "worker"

Extensive consultation is expected on the proposal to have one category of worker (instead of employees and workers). This change will not be immediate.

## Ethnicity and disability pay gap

Proposed reporting obligations are subject to consultation and will not be imminent.

## Right to switch off

To be set out in a Code, suggesting some flexibility. Perhaps achievable more quickly than other reforms.



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If you would like to discuss these proposals, or how they may impact your business, please contact a member of the Fieldfisher team

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