

Employment Rights Act 2025

Business Readiness Checklist | People Puzzles | peoplepuzzles.co.uk

How ready is your business? Work through each section below. For every item you can't tick, there's a compliance gap — and potentially a legal risk. The more you leave unchecked, the stronger the case for getting expert HR support in place now.

Dec 2025 – Feb 2026

Already in force — check you haven't missed these

- ☐ Have you noted that the 12-week limit for automatic unfair dismissal for industrial action has been removed?
- ☐ Are you aware that dismissal for taking part in industrial action is now automatically unfair from day one?
- ☐ Have you updated your approach to minimum service level obligations now that the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 is repealed?

1 Apr 2026

1 April 2026 — Paternity & parental leave notice

- ☐ Are your managers aware that employees can now give notice of Day-1 paternity leave and unpaid parental leave entitlement from 1 April?
- ☐ Have you updated your onboarding process to capture leave notice from the very first day of employment?

6 Apr 2026

6 April 2026 — The major wave (these are NOW IN EFFECT)

- ☐ Have you removed the earnings threshold from your Statutory Sick Pay policy so that all employees qualify regardless of earnings?
SSP now payable from day one at £123.25/week — or 80% of average earnings if below the LEL
- ☐ Have you removed all waiting days from your SSP process so that pay begins from the first day of absence?
- ☐ Have you updated paternity leave and unpaid parental leave policies to remove any qualifying service period?
Both are now Day-1 rights
- ☐ Have you updated contracts and offer letters to reflect Day-1 family leave entitlements?
- ☐ Are line managers trained on the new Day-1 entitlements so they don't inadvertently refuse a valid request?
- ☐ Have you updated your bereavement policy to include the new Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave (up to 52 weeks)?
- ☐ Have you doubled the maximum protective award budget in your collective redundancy risk planning (now 180 days' pay, up from 90)?
- ☐ Are your HR and legal advisors aligned on the extended collective consultation duties and the risk of consultation failures?
- ☐ Have you updated your whistleblowing policy to include sexual harassment as a qualifying protected disclosure?
- ☐ Have you briefed your HR team that a harassment complaint can now simultaneously be a whistleblowing disclosure?
- ☐ Have you begun keeping mandatory records of annual leave entitlement and holiday pay? (6-year retention required)
- ☐ Are you aware of the simplified trade union recognition process and assessed your exposure if unions seek recognition in your business?
- ☐ Have you reviewed your existing gender pay gap position ahead of voluntary action plan publication becoming expected from April 2026?
Mandatory for 250+ staff from 2027 — but reputational risk starts now
- ☐ Have you reviewed your menopause support provisions ahead of voluntary action plan publication?

7 Apr 2026

7 April 2026 — Fair Work Agency established

- ☐ Are you aware the Fair Work Agency (FWA) is now operational, consolidating enforcement of NMW, employment agency standards and labour abuse?
- ☐ Have you reviewed your National Minimum/Living Wage compliance, given the FWA's enhanced enforcement powers? (NLW now £12.71/hour for 21+)
- ☐ Have you assessed whether your business has previously relied on fragmented enforcement as a risk mitigator — and adjusted accordingly?

Aug 2026

August 2026 — Trade union balloting

- ☐ Are you aware that electronic and workplace balloting for statutory trade union ballots will be introduced in August 2026?
- ☐ Have you reviewed your industrial relations strategy in light of easier, more accessible union balloting?

Oct 2026

October 2026 — Harassment, tribunal limits & more

- ☐ Have you begun planning for the enhanced duty to take 'all reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment (upgraded from 'reasonable steps')?

Regulations will specify what 'all reasonable steps' means — monitor EHRC guidance

- ☐ Have you assessed your exposure to third-party harassment liability, which is being formally reintroduced from October 2026?

- ☐ Do you have a training programme in place for managers on harassment prevention that will meet the 'all reasonable steps' standard?

- ☐ Are you prepared for employment tribunal time limits to extend from 3 to 6 months (expected October 2026)?

This increases the window in which claims can be brought against you

- ☐ Have you reviewed your tipping policy and do you have a process to consult your workforce before publishing or updating it?

- ☐ Are you aware that employers will be required to give workers a written statement of their right to join a trade union from October 2026?

- ☐ Have you noted that trade union representatives will have strengthened rights to paid time off and facilities from October 2026?

2027

2027 — Plan ahead now

- ☐ Have you flagged the reduction of the qualifying period for unfair dismissal from two years to six months in your HR risk planning? Anyone hired from approximately late June 2026 will qualify for unfair dismissal protection from January 2027.

This is one of the most significant changes — start reviewing your probation and performance processes now

- ☐ Have you started planning for mandatory gender pay gap action plans for employers with 250+ staff?

- ☐ Have you started planning for mandatory menopause action plans for employers with 250+ staff?

- ☐ Are you across the incoming restrictions on fire and rehire (now delayed to January 2027)?

Dismissal for refusing a 'restricted variation' will be automatically unfair unless a severe financial difficulty exemption applies

- ☐ Have you reviewed your shift pattern and working hours practices ahead of guaranteed hours rights and shift notice/cancellation compensation obligations?

- ☐ Are you monitoring the development of new organisation-wide collective redundancy thresholds (expected 2027)?

- ☐ Have you reviewed your NDA practices ahead of incoming regulations restricting non-disclosure agreements?

Counted more unchecked boxes than you'd like?

Our People Directors work with ambitious businesses to make sure you're compliant, protected and confident — without the cost of a full-time HR Director.

Book a free 30-minute call
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