



# Employment Rights Bill: mini resource pack

Quick **checklists** for  
managers and HR leaders



The Employment Rights Bill will bring **major changes from now, April 2026 and onwards**. Here are our 5 key highlights from the webinar, for what you need to know at a glance.

Information correct at time of publishing (September 2025). Employment Law is subject to change, and this resource is for guidance only.

# Visual timeline

## (at a glance)

### April 2026

Sick pay changes  
Day-one Parental and  
Paternity Leave  
Sexual harassment added to  
whistleblowing

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### October 2026

Stronger harassment  
protections and prevention duty

### In 2027

Day-one unfair dismissal rights  
Zero-hours reforms  
Flexible working changes  
Ban on NDAs (TBA)

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# Line/people manager checklist

**5 major legal changes every manager needs to know**  
(and start to prepare for)

This checklist covers our webinar highlights and is here to help you with practical steps for what's next.

## 1. Harassment protections (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Employers have a duty to take "all reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment and discriminatory harassment of any kind from third parties
- ☐ Address concerns from employees, customers, or third parties seriously
- ☐ Ensure reporting channels are safe, accessible, and well-communicated
- ☐ Don't dismiss informal complaints - act on them consistently



**Timeline:** Protections strengthened, expected 2026.



**Tool:** Breathe's Learn add-on can help, includes sexual harassment awareness course.

[Learn more](#)

Sexual Harassment Awareness for Employee

Assign people to course

"Managers can't afford to ignore informal complaints. **Every concern is a compliance risk** if left unaddressed."

- Sandra Porter



## 2. Flexible and hybrid working rights

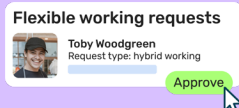
- ☐ Employees now have stronger rights to request flexible or hybrid working
- ☐ Be open and supportive - handle requests fairly and consistently
- ☐ Update team practices and schedules to reflect new entitlements
- ☐ Speak with HR about policy and training updates to stay compliant



**Timeline:** Better access to flexible working expected 2027.



**Tool:** Try out Breathe's flexible working requests.  
[Learn more](#)



**Case example:** A new starter requests hybrid working on day one - you must follow the process, not dismiss the request outright.

## 3. Sick pay changes (⚠️ Medium risk)

- ☐ No waiting days - sick pay entitlement begins immediately
- ☐ Lower-paid & zero-hours staff will qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from day one
- ☐ Record absences accurately and report them promptly
- ☐ Show empathy - avoid pressuring unwell employees to work



**Timeline:** Expected April 2026



**Case example:** A zero-hours worker calls in sick on their first shift. You must now ensure SSP is considered straight away.



## 4. Day-one unfair dismissal rights (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Statutory Probationary Period will be introduced – unfair dismissal protection applies from day one, with light touch procedure in some cases during initial period of employment
- ☐ Document all performance and conduct issues from the very start
- ☐ Follow consistent, fair dismissal procedures
- ☐ Involve HR before making any dismissal decision



**Timeline:** Expected 2027



**Tool:** Use Breathe's performance management feature to record performance.

[Learn more](#)

Add training for

People Management  
03/02/2025 - 05



**Conversation prompt:** Ask HR: "What's the updated process I should follow if someone isn't meeting expectations during probation?"

## 5. Zero-hours reforms: Guaranteed hours (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Workers and agency workers must be offered fixed/guaranteed hours after initial reference period (likely 12 weeks)

**Further review periods expected:**

- ☐ Plan ahead when creating rotas to reflect potential guaranteed hours
- ☐ Raise any contract changes or concerns with HR early



**Timeline:** Expected 2027



**Conversation prompt:** Ask HR: "How do I keep up to date with offers of a guaranteed hours contract?"

## Be a supportive manager

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with these new rights and responsibilities
- ✓ Ask HR if you're unsure - it's always better to check early
- ✓ Lead with fairness, consistency, and clear communication

If you're not feeling confident when it comes to HR or employment law, or you have a question, connect with one of Breathe's HR Partners:



### **Angie Crush** - Omny Group

Email to book a complimentary employment law 1-2-1 and request your Employment Rights Bill tracker from Angie:  
**[angie.crush@omnygroup.co.uk](mailto:angie.crush@omnygroup.co.uk)**



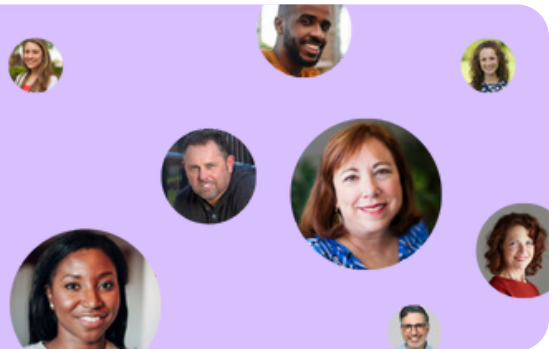
### **Sandra Porter** - HR Dept Elmbridge

Email for HR and/or employment law advice:  
**[hrhelp@hrdept.co.uk](mailto:hrhelp@hrdept.co.uk)**

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Find the right HR Consultant for you

[Partner Directory](#)



# HR leader checklist

**5 major legal changes HR needs to prepare for** and embed into policies, systems, and processes.

This checklist builds on the same reforms but focuses on your HR responsibilities to help keep the business compliant and managers supported.

## 1. Harassment protections (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Update policies and practices to reflect duty to take “all reasonable steps”
- ☐ Include third-party harassment risks in policies and training
- ☐ Conduct risk assessments and review reporting channels
- ☐ Deliver mandatory training across the workforce



**Timeline:** Strengthened protections expected 2026. Sexual harassment protections introduced in October 2024, already law.



**Tool:** Breathe's Learn add-on – includes a sexual harassment awareness course.

[Learn more](#)

Sexual Harassment  
Awareness for Employee

Assign people to course



**Conversation prompt:** Ask managers: “How do employees currently raise concerns – and does this feel safe and accessible?”

## 2. Flexible and hybrid working rights (⚠️ Medium risk)

- ☐ Update flexible/hybrid working policies for day-one entitlement
- ☐ Ensure systems (like Breathe) track requests consistently
- ☐ Train managers to handle requests fairly and without bias
- ☐ Review team structures to support flexible working



**Timeline:** Better access to flexible working expected 2027.



**Tool:** Use Breathe's flexible working request feature to manage applications

[Learn more](#)



**Case example:** A new hire requests part-time hours on day one - HR must ensure processes exist to assess and respond fairly.

## 3. Sick pay changes (⚠️ Medium risk)

- ☐ Update SSP policies - remove waiting days and lower earnings threshold/remove Company sick pay alignment with SSP
- ☐ Notify payroll & finance teams of expanded eligibility requirements
- ☐ Provide managers with clear absence-reporting guidance
- ☐ Communicate updates with employee FAQs or policy briefs



**Timeline:** Expected April 2026

"The sick pay reforms will **particularly impact SMEs with casual staff** - making clear guidance and payroll readiness essential." - [Angie Crush](#)





## 4. Day-one unfair dismissal rights (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Update dismissal and grievance policies, contracts & handbooks
- ☐ Review probation period references
- ☐ Provide training and documentation guidance for managers
- ☐ Align disciplinary workflows in HR systems



**Timeline:** Expected 2027



**Tool:** Use Breathe's performance management feature to track issues and evidence compliance.  
[Learn more](#)



**Conversation prompt:** Ask managers: "How confident are you in handling underperformance fairly from day one?"

## 5. Zero-hours reforms: Guaranteed hours (⚠️ High risk)

- ☐ Identify staff on zero or minimal hours arrangements and contracts
- ☐ Prepare processes for guaranteed hour offers after 12 weeks and on a rolling basis
- ☐ Update employment contracts, offer letters and scheduling practices
- ☐ Train managers on escalation and approval processes



**Timeline:** Expected 2027



**Case example:** An employee passes 12 weeks on a zero-hours contract – HR must ensure processes exist to review and confirm guaranteed hours.

## Be a proactive HR leader

- ✓ Schedule a full policy and contract review (with legal input if needed)
- ✓ Train line managers on new rights and responsibilities
- ✓ Use Breathe's HR tools to manage leave, performance, and documentation
- ✓ Build a change-management comms plan for employees

## Next steps (for both managers and HR)

- ☒ Familiarise yourself with the reforms and timelines
- ☐ Use Breathe to track requests, manage performance, and update policies
- ☐ Create a shared plan: HR sets policies, managers apply them consistently
- ☐ Keep communication open: encourage questions, feedback, and early escalation

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