Gardner Leader

Employment Rights Act 2025 Timeline

The Employment Rights Act 2025 introduces a wide range of changes affecting employers. Some reforms have already taken effect, with further changes planned over the coming months and years. Our compliance calendar is designed to support proactive planning, enabling employers to prepare ahead of implementation.

Industrial action | Harassment | Sick Pay | Family friendly reforms
Flexible working | Dismissal rights | Reporting obligations | Enforcement

December 2025

18 December 2025

- Employment Rights Act receives Royal Assent
- Removal of the statutory framework for "minimum service levels" during strike action

February 2026

18 February 2026

- Automatic unfair dismissal for participation in lawful industrial action
- Industrial action notice period reduced to 10 days
- Industrial action mandates extended to 12 months
- Removal of the 12-week limit on protection against unfair dismissal for taking part in protected industrial action
- Picket supervisors no longer required
- Removal of the 40% public sector support threshold

April 2026

6 April 2026

- Paternity and unpaid parental leave become day-one rights
- Removal of restriction on taking paternity leave after shared parental leave
- Unpaid bereaved partner's paternity leave for eligible fathers and partners
- Statutory Sick Pay becomes a day-one right (no waiting days)
- Removal of the Lower Earnings Limit for Statutory Sick Pay
- Maximum protective award for failure to consult on redundancies doubles to 180 days' pay
- Sexual harassment becomes a protected whistleblowing disclosure
- Employers of all sizes can voluntarily publish menopause and gender pay gap action plans. Mandatory requirements for qualifying employers are planned for March and April 2027, as set out below.
- Simplification of trade union recognition: removal of the likely-majority test on application and the 40% support threshold in recognition ballots. Further recognition reforms took effect on 30 October 2026
- Employers must keep records of annual leave and holiday pay for at least six years

August 2026

7 April 2026

- Establishment of the Fair Work Agency, with powers to bring tribunal claims on behalf of workers

October 2026

25 August 2026

- Introduction of e-balloting for trade union ballots

1 October 2026

- Tribunal limitation period extended to six months

30 October 2026

- Employers must take "*all reasonable steps*" to prevent sexual harassment, replacing the previous requirement to take "*reasonable steps*"
- Employer liability for third-party harassment unless all reasonable steps are taken
- Increased workplace access rights for trade unions, alongside other trade union changes
- Protection for workers taking part in industrial action from being treated less favourably

January 2027

1 January 2027

- Reduction of the unfair dismissal qualifying period to six months
- Removal of the statutory cap on the compensatory award for unfair dismissal
- Workers must be informed in writing of their right to join a trade union
- Mandatory consultation on tipping policies and a requirement to review policies at least once every three years

By January 2027

- New negotiating body for adult social care workers

March 2027

March 2027

- Fire and rehire becomes an automatically unfair dismissal in most cases, with an updated Code of Practice to support the changes expected during 2027
- Mandatory menopause and gender pay gap action plans for public sector employers with 250+ employees.

April 2027

April 2027

- Introduction of day-one statutory unpaid bereavement leave
- Up to two weeks of unpaid bereavement leave for eligible employees affected by pregnancy loss before 24 weeks, including eligible partners (planned for April 2027, subject to implementing regulations)
- Reform of collective redundancy thresholds to require consideration of redundancies across an employer's organisation, rather than only at individual establishments
- Mandatory menopause and gender pay gap action plans for private and voluntary sector employers with 250+ employees.
- Extended protection for trade union members from discrimination and from being "blacklisted".

August 2027

August 2027

- Introduction of electronic voting in ballots for trade union recognition and derecognition.

September 2027

September 2027

- Clauses preventing workers from alleging or disclosing work-related harassment or discrimination will be void.

October 2027

October 2027

- Strengthening of flexible working rights, including an obligation to explain refusals
- Enhanced protection from dismissal for pregnant workers and those returning from maternity leave

2027 (to be confirmed)

2027 (to be confirmed)

- Guaranteed hours contracts for zero- and low-hours workers
- Right to payment for cancelled or curtailed shifts and enhanced notice requirements
- Clarification of what constitutes "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment

This timeline is provided for general information only and does not constitute legal advice. It is based on legislation and guidance available at the date of publication (November 2026) and may change as further detail and commencement dates are confirmed.