

Employment Rights Bill Changes (April 2026) Employer Guidance

	Changes	Actions
Paternity and Parental Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees will qualify for statutory paternity leave and unpaid parental leave <i>from day one, with no minimum service period.</i> • Employees can give notice from <i>18 February 2026 for leave starting on/after 6 April 2026</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update leave policies and onboarding documentation. • Ensure line managers are trained to handle requests fairly and consistently from new starters.
Bereavement Leave Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible employees can take <i>up to 52 weeks</i> of bereaved partner paternity leave if the mother/adopter dies; this is a <i>day-one right.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review compassionate leave procedures. • Ensure HR and managers understand that pay for this leave is at the employer's discretion.
Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From <i>6 April 2026:</i> • SSP is payable <i>from day one</i>, removing the three-day waiting period. • The <i>lower earnings limit is removed</i>, expanding eligibility to part-time and lower-paid workers. • SSP will be <i>80% of normal weekly earnings or the flat rate, whichever is lower, with the flat rate rising to £123.25.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for increased short-term sickness costs. • Review absence management triggers to ensure they remain fair and manageable. • Update payroll systems before April.

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Redundancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to meet collective consultation rules will result in a <i>maximum protective award of 180 days' pay</i>, up from 90 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure legally compliant processes during restructures. Engage HR early in any workforce planning that may involve redundancies.
Whistleblowing Protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing claims involving <i>sexual harassment</i> gain specific legal protection from April 2026. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review internal reporting procedures. Ensure managers understand their responsibilities when receiving sensitive disclosures.
Trade Union & Industrial Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic and workplace balloting for union votes becomes permitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how recognition requests work under the new rules. Prepare for potentially higher levels of union engagement and activity.
New Fair Work Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Fair Work Agency</i> launches 7 April 2026, adding new enforcement oversight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance processes are up to date across HR, payroll, and line-management practices.