

## HR BRIEF OCT 2010

### The Equality Act 2010

Although The Equality Act 2010 became law on 8 April 2010 the Government has confirmed the provision will come into effect on 1 October 2010. This has been brought in to encourage faster implementation of equality in the workplace and the community bringing together 9 major laws and around 100 other pieces of legislation into a single Act. It seeks to harmonise the various strands of diversity to help make equality and diversity easier to understand.

The major strands of diversity;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2010 seeks;

- To ensure people are treated fairly and that everyone is given the same chances to do what they can do.
- Make people's rights clearer and strengthens the legislation in respect of direct/indirect discrimination.
- Gender pay gaps will be challenged if employers don't address them voluntarily.
- Public bodies will be required to publish their gender pay gap and employment equality details.
- Further protection is given to carers, breast feeding mums and private members clubs under the new legislation.
- Employers are prevented from asking job applicants, before making a job offer, certain questions about their disability or health, except in certain circumstances such as for reasons of conforming to DDA legislation.
- To provide new powers for employment tribunals to make recommendations that will benefit the wider workforce.

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### New Minimum Wage Rates

**National Minimum Wage from 1 Oct 2010 (hourly rate):**

£2.50 for Apprentices aged 19 years and under or in the first year of training

£3.64 for workers aged 16 – 17 years

£4.92 for workers aged 18 – 20 years

£5.93 for workers aged 21 years plus

### Additional Paternity Leave Update

The planned implementation for the new Additional Paternity Leave (and Pay) Regulations, has been put on hold until a further review has been conducted by the new coalition government. The legislation would give new fathers of babies born after 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011 rights to have up to 26 weeks paternity leave, in addition to the present 2 weeks entitlement. There's a possibility that these regulations may be repealed and replaced by greater far reaching flexible rights for employees. So, in the short term, employers are being advised not to amend family friendly policy's etc in accordance to the previous planned changes until a clearer picture of the new legislation is available.

### New Pension Arrangements

Under The Employers Duties (Implementation) Regulations 2010, mandatory contributions for employers and employees into a pension scheme are a requirement from 2012. For business' with less than 50 employees, dates will be split (depending on the last 2 Payee reference numbers) over 18 dates from 1 August 2014 to 1 Feb 2016 for auto-enrolment for the new pension requirements. Government will give the option to employers/employees to either join their own NEST (National Employers Saving Trust) schemes or have their own company pension scheme.

### Resolve 'HR Software' Offer

We are pleased to announce the extension of the 25% reduction offer for our 'HR Software' CD Rom up to the 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2010. *That's just £374.99 inc. VAT*, the usual price is £499.99 inc VAT. This offer works out at around £1 per day including license cover for up to 250 staff. A bargain!

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