

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ROUTE

Stay ahead of what changes next

A practical route through the Employment Rights Act 2025: policy scan, manager capability and procedure alignment.

ROADMAP

Current at 6 September 2026

How to use it

Work through the prompts in order, record only what is needed, and adapt the steps to your policy, the facts and the people involved.

This document is a general guide and practical aid only. It is not legal advice and should not be relied on as a substitute for advice about a specific situation. Check current law, official guidance, contracts, policies and collective arrangements before acting.

What has already changed

The Act is being implemented in phases. The items below were already in force by this resource's review date.

Effective date	Key measures	Kindred readiness prompt
December 2025	Repeal of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023.	Check industrial-relations references if relevant.
18 February 2026	Major Trade Union Act 2016 repeals; industrial action changes; protections against dismissal for taking industrial action; notice available for newly eligible day-one paternity and unpaid parental leave.	Update specialist union processes and manager escalation points.
1 April 2026	Certification Officer levy repealed.	Relevant mainly to unions and employer associations.
6-7 April 2026	Day-one paternity and unpaid parental leave; SSP waiting period and Lower Earnings Limit removed; stronger whistleblowing protection relating to sexual harassment; doubled collective redundancy protective award; Fair Work Agency established; other measures.	Audit family leave, sickness absence / payroll, whistleblowing and redundancy materials.
25 August 2026	Electronic and workplace balloting for statutory trade union ballots.	Update union-facing processes where relevant.

Check reality

A policy can be updated while day-to-day practice remains old. Sample forms, payroll rules, manager answers and recent cases - not just the handbook wording.

What is scheduled next

Future dates remain subject to parliamentary processes and may change. Recheck the official timetable before implementation.

Expected date	Headline change	Prepare now
1 October 2026	Employment Tribunal time limit increases from 3 to 6 months (Scottish breach-of-contract claims: 9 November 2026).	Update letters, templates, settlement / dispute workflows and manager guidance.
30 October 2026	Stronger duty to prevent sexual harassment; third-party harassment obligation; trade union access, information and representative protections; industrial-action detriment protections.	Refresh prevention plan, risk assessment, reporting, third-party controls, training and union protocols.
December / by end of 2026	Seafarer Protection Regulations; strengthened tipping law.	Confirm sector relevance and named policy owners.
1 January 2027	Unfair dismissal qualifying period reduces to 6 months for dismissals from this date; compensatory awards uncapped; fire-and-rehire protections.	Review probation, early-service capability / conduct, dismissal governance and change consultation.
During 2027	Further reforms include mandatory gender equality / menopause action plans, pregnancy and new-mother dismissal protections, collective redundancy threshold, flexible working, bereavement leave, guaranteed hours / notice rights, umbrella company regulation and more.	Assign owners, track consultations and avoid drafting final wording before details are settled.

Priority for most employers

The October 2026 harassment duties and January 2027 dismissal changes deserve early attention because they affect manager behaviour, evidence, prevention and decision governance - not policy wording alone.

Phase 1 - Policy scan in place

Create one controlled view of what must change, what may change and what needs monitoring.

Policy / process	Question	Owner / status
Family leave	Do paternity and unpaid parental leave operate from day one?	
Sickness / payroll	Are SSP eligibility, waiting days, payroll and manager scripts aligned?	
Whistleblowing	Do examples and escalation cover sexual harassment disclosures?	
Redundancy	Do risk controls reflect the higher protective-award exposure and future threshold reform?	
Harassment	Can the organisation evidence all reasonable preventive steps and control third-party risk?	
Discipline / dismissal	Are early-service cases, probation, fairness, authority and appeal ready for 2027?	
Change / fire and rehire	Is consultation governance strong enough for the new protections?	
Flexible / guaranteed hours	Who is tracking detail, systems, records and manager implications?	

Top three policy gaps and immediate controls

Phase 2 - Manager capability refresh

Managers need decision support, not a list of legal headlines.

- ☐ Explain what is already law, what has a confirmed date and what is still being developed.
- ☐ Practise receiving harassment, whistleblowing and family-leave concerns without creating detriment.
- ☐ Strengthen early-service performance and conduct conversations before the January 2027 dismissal changes.
- ☐ Train managers to record facts, support, adjustments, expectations and follow-up consistently.
- ☐ Refresh consultation skills: explain status, listen genuinely, consider alternatives and escalate risk.
- ☐ Give managers one route for questions and urgent cases, with response ownership and turnaround times.

Manager groups / briefing format / completion date

Scenarios to practise

Escalation route and named advisers

Evidence matters

Keep a proportionate record of briefings, attendance, materials, questions and follow-up. For harassment prevention, training should sit within a wider evidence-based prevention plan.

Phase 3 - Procedure alignment review

Connect policy, process, systems and communications before the effective date.

Alignment test	Complete when...
Source	Official commencement date and detail are rechecked; assumptions are labelled.
Governance	An authorised owner approves wording, risk position and implementation date.
Documents	Policy, handbook, letters, forms, FAQs and contracts tell the same story.
Systems	HRIS, payroll, case management, scheduling and reporting reflect the rule.
People	Managers, HR, payroll, representatives and affected employees know their role.
Accessibility	Communications reach absentees and are accessible for disability and language needs.
Assurance	Sample testing, exception handling, metrics and review dates are in place.

90-day action plan - action / owner / due date / evidence

Kindred route

Scan first, build manager confidence second, then align the full procedure. That sequence turns legislative awareness into consistent workplace practice.

Sources and use note

Content checked against the following official guidance on 6 September 2026:

- [GOV.UK - Employment Rights Act timeline update](#)
- [GOV.UK - Implementing the Plan to Make Work Pay and Employment Rights Act](#)
- [Acas - Employment law updates](#)

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