

NEW EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS COME INTO EFFECT ON 6 APRIL IS YOUR ORGANISATION PREPARED?

New 'day one' rights come into effect on 6 April 2026 and employers need to be prepared.

While many headline reforms introduced by the Employment Rights Act 2025 will not land until 2027, employers should be aware of the new 'day one' rights which employees will be entitled to from 6 April 2026.

STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

Entitlement to SSP currently applies from the fourth day of sickness, but this three-day waiting period will be removed:

The lower earnings threshold (currently £125 per week) will also be dropped and leave all employees eligible for SSP.

From 6 April 2026, employees off sick will receive the lower of the rate of SSP and 80% of their average weekly earnings.

Employers may find themselves dealing with more cases of sick leave abuse, which will need to be handled carefully.

Approaches to reducing abuse include asking employees to check in regularly when off sick and holding return-to-work interviews.

PATERNITY AND ORDINARY PARENTAL LEAVE

Paternity and ordinary parental leave will both become a 'day one' right:

- Currently, paternity leave is only available after 26 weeks of employment; this qualifying requirement will not change concerning paternity pay.
- Unpaid ordinary parental leave is currently only available after working for a year.

The restriction on an employee taking paternity leave after taking shared parental leave will be removed.

BEREAVED PARTNERS PATERNITY LEAVE

This has been introduced by separate legislation but will be a new statutory entitlement from 6 April 2026 and again, a 'day one' right. There is no statutory pay requirement.



The new leave can be taken by an employee who loses the mother of a child within the first year of the child's life. Up to 52 weeks of leave can be taken, depending on when bereavement occurs. The same leave is available if a child is adopted and the primary adopter dies.

Read more in Government factsheets covering [SSP](#) and [paternity and parental leave](#) changes.

WE CAN HELP

For more information on any issues raised in this article, call us on **01753 888 211** or email info@nhllp.com, we are here to help.