

When things go wrong – Get it right



Problems with employees may arise occasionally and you may need to take disciplinary action against a worker or deal with a grievance. It is wise to address problems as they come up rather than let them drag on until the situation becomes worse than it needs to.

The law requires employers to set out their **dismissal, disciplinary** and **grievance** rules in writing for their employees.

There are simple three-step procedures for dealing with disciplinary or grievance issues:-

Write it down – If you need to take disciplinary action against an employee, you need to outline your reasons to the worker in writing. If your employee wishes to start a grievance procedure against you, it is your right to receive the reasons in writing.

Meet your employee – You should arrange a meeting with your worker to discuss the problem.

Arrange an appeal – You must arrange an appeal meeting if one is requested by your worker. You should make sure that your employee is aware of the result of the appeal.

It is important that you have procedures in place and follow them to ensure that you treat your workers fairly. Please see our information sheet for more details which you can get from our website or phone us for a copy or further advice.

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Annual leave for workers increased

From 1 October 2007 all workers are entitled to at least 4.8 weeks paid annual leave.



You may offer more than this, subject to your Direct Payments budget allowing you to do so. The entitlement will increase further to 5.6 weeks from 1 April 2009.

You will need to work out a pro rata rate for part-time workers. You can count paid leave on bank and public holidays as part of the 4.8 weeks.

Employing Overseas Workers

Increasing numbers of people are coming from abroad looking for work. Direct Payments users can take advantage of the fact that there is a greater number of workers potentially available.



Employing Overseas Workers continued

You need to know what documents they need to provide and you must be able to check them and make sure that the person you intend to employ can work legally in the United Kingdom.

Your worker must show you documents that prove he/she is entitled to work in the UK. One example of such a document is a valid EC passport.

All the documents your potential employee gives you must be originals; copies will not be acceptable.

After checking the documents and satisfying yourself that they are genuine, you must save copies for your records. You could photocopy the documents or scan them into your computer securely.

If you have obtained suitable documents from your potential worker, ensuring the documents are genuine, saved and stored them securely, you should not have any difficulty employing a worker from overseas. Please see our information sheet for further details.

National Minimum Wage

The National Minimum wage was increased on 1 October 2007. The latest figures are as follows.

Frequently Asked Questions



Q. Can I agree with my Personal Assistant to pay less than the minimum wage if that means I can afford to have them work extra hours?

A. No. Any payment below the minimum wage is illegal. You could pay the minimum wage but generally the better the terms and conditions you offer the more likely you are to recruit and keep good staff.

Q. What is 'Employers' Liability Insurance'?

A. You are legally required to take out insurance to cover your employees in the event of them being injured or becoming ill as a result of their work while employed by you.

Q. Can I have a mixture of Direct Payments and other social services?

A. Yes. Many people find it useful to have Direct Payments and retain some of their care package delivery directly from the Trust.

Age	Hourly Rate
22 and over	£5.52
18 - 20	£4.60
16 - 17	£3.40

Health Trusts re-structured

On 1 April 2007 the existing Health and Social Services Trusts in Northern Ireland were reduced to five. The table below shows how they were re-structured.

Board Area	Health & Social Care Trust	Formerly
EHSSB	Belfast	S&E Belfast N&W Belfast
	South Eastern	Down & Lisburn Ulster Community & Hospitals
SHSSB	Southern	Armagh & Dungannon Craigavon & Banbridge Newry & Mourne
WHSSB	Western	Sperrin & Lakeland Foyle
NHSSB	Northern	Homefirst Causeway

Did you know...?

Centre for Independent Living has a comprehensive range of information sheets covering many aspects of employing staff. These are available from CIL on request or from our website at www.cilbelfast.org. If there are any additional topics that you would like us to cover, please let us know.

Keeping in touch

We are still interested in finding ways that Direct Payments users can keep in touch with each other. There is a number of ways this can be done including telephone or e-mail contact lists and group meetings.

If you can think of any other ways of Direct Payments users staying in contact, tell us of your ideas. Also, let us know if you would like to get involved with something in your area.

New staff for CIL



We are very pleased to announce the extension of our services to the Western Trust area; Helen Anderson is the Independent Living Adviser and Claire Devine is the Administrator. Also, we have an additional Independent Living Adviser in the Eastern area; Deena Nimick will focus on areas of low uptake of Direct Payments. In the first year this will be in the geographical area of North & West Belfast; later we will look at other areas such as mental health and learning disability.

Tribute to Michael Morgan



It is our sad duty to report that we lost a valuable member of our team when Michael Morgan who served on the Management committee of Centre for Independent Living died suddenly in April 2007.

Michael gave his time and commitment generously to the cause of disabled people in the pursuit of our right to live independently and be treated fairly within society. His contribution to our work will be missed as will his humour and warm friendship.

Contact us

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