

Major employment law changes introduced

17 September 2019

You may have heard about these changes before, but as an employer, you cannot simply ignore! We strongly encourage you to have your employment agreements, policies, practices and procedures reviewed.

Key employment law changes are:

Set Meal and Rest Breaks

- a regulated requirement to allow minimum breaks
- timing of breaks can be mutually agreed
- new provisions of the Act apply should agreement not be reached

90-day Trial Period

- now applies to only those employers with fewer than 20 employees
- employment agreement must contain such a clause for it to be enforceable
- signed employment agreement must be in place before commencement of work

Collective Agreements

- ER Act is based on a duty of good faith and promotes collective bargaining
- a return to unions having greater rights and access in the workplace

Reinstatement

- now the primary remedy when unfairly dismissed from employment

Employment Agreements

- \$1,000 fine for each failure to have a written & signed employment agreement

Redundancy

- additional protection now for vulnerable workers

KiwiSaver

- employees over age of 65 can now join
- anyone can now withdraw money from scheme at age 65

Victims of Family Violence

- 6 months continuous service to become eligible for employer support
- entitles employees affected by family violence up to 10 days paid leave per year
- this leave does not accrue & untaken entitlement cannot be carried forward
- employees able to request short term variation to normal working arrangements
- update policies & employment agreements to include Family Violence provisions

Further assistance and advice available by contacting [Kearin Pollard](#), our employment legislation and compliance expert, at Baker Tilly Staples Rodway Taranaki.

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