

# Employment Rights Act 2025: what changes when

*And what each change means for your HR data. Correct at 8 October 2026.*

Most guides tell you what the law says. This one adds the question I always end up asking: when someone asks you to show what you did, will your HR data back you up? The changes below are in date order, with a plain-English note on what each one asks of your records.

| When                                | What changes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | What your HR data needs to do                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Already in force</b>             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>February to August 2026</b>      | Changes to industrial action rules and trade union ballots.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mainly relevant if you recognise a union. Little change to HR data for most small employers.                                                                            |
| <b>6 April 2026</b>                 | Day one rights to paternity leave and unpaid parental leave. Statutory Sick Pay paid from the first day of sickness, with the lower earnings limit removed.                                                                                                                                                                           | Record absence accurately from day one for everyone, including lower earners. Code leave types consistently so you can see who took what.                               |
| <b>6 April 2026</b>                 | Whistleblowing protection covers reports of sexual harassment. Voluntary gender equality and menopause action plans. Bigger protective awards in collective redundancy.                                                                                                                                                               | Know where concerns are logged and who can see them. Get your gender pay gap data in order if you plan to publish an action plan.                                       |
| <b>7 April 2026</b>                 | Fair Work Agency set up to enforce employment rights.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Holiday and pay records you can produce quickly and explain if asked.                                                                                                   |
| <b>1 October 2026</b>               | Time limit for most employment tribunal claims extended from three to six months.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Keep leaver records accessible for longer. Check your retention schedule still makes sense.                                                                             |
| <b>Coming next</b>                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>30 October 2026</b>              | Duty to take "all reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment, including by third parties. Trade union access and recognition changes.                                                                                                                                                                                             | Evidence of what you have done: training records, policy sign-offs, risk assessments and how complaints were handled.                                                   |
| <b>By end of 2026</b>               | Strengthened law on tips.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | If tips apply to you, records of how they are shared out.                                                                                                               |
| <b>January 2027</b>                 | Unfair dismissal qualifying period cut to six months (dismissals from 1 January 2027), with the compensation cap removed. Fire and rehire protections. Duty to tell workers they can join a union.                                                                                                                                    | Accurate start dates and continuous service. Probation reviews recorded on time. A clear record of any contract changes and the consultation behind them.               |
| <b>2027 (dates to be confirmed)</b> | Flexible working changes. Bereavement leave, including pregnancy loss. Guaranteed hours for zero and low-hours workers. Stronger protection for pregnant women and new mothers. Mandatory gender equality and menopause action plans. Collective redundancy threshold changes. Limits on NDAs in harassment and discrimination cases. | A flexible working request log with reasons for decisions. Reliable hours data for variable-hours staff. New leave types set up in your HR system before you need them. |

*Dates are taken from the government's timeline update (last updated 25 September 2026) and can change as legislation goes through Parliament. This is a planning summary, not legal advice. Check the latest position at [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) before acting.*

**Not sure your HR data is ready for this?** Book a free HR Data Clarity Call: [portal.thehorseyhrlady.co.uk/hrdataclaritycall](https://portal.thehorseyhrlady.co.uk/hrdataclaritycall)