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Thank You

2018 is in full swing here at Goldstein Ryder! We have been very busy with many new clients, mediations and preparation for hearings! We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our clients who continue to refer work to us.



Employment Law Update

The Employment Relations Amendment Bill was introduced on 29 January 2018. It had its first reading in Parliament on 1 February 2018 and is now with the Select Committee.

The Bill will bring about several key changes to employment law including:

- Limiting trial periods;
- Reinstating the right to rest and meal breaks;
- Making reinstatement the primary remedy for employees; and
- Making union membership a prohibited ground of discrimination.

One of the most notable changes is to the trial period regime. The Bill provides that only employers who employ fewer than 20 employees are able to have trial periods in their agreements. Any trial periods contained in agreements entered into before the Act comes into force will be unaffected by the new law.

Another notable change is the reinstatement of prescribed rest and meal breaks.

If employees work for between 2 and 4 hours, they will be entitled to one ten-minute paid rest break.

If employees work for between 4 and 6 hours, they will be entitled to one ten-minute paid rest break and one 30-minute unpaid meal break.

If employees work for between 6 and 8 hours, they will be entitled to two ten-minute paid rest breaks and one 30-minute unpaid meal break.

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If an employee works more than 8 hours, the time they work beyond 8 hours is treated as if it were the start of another shift, and the employee is further entitled to rest and meal breaks as set out above.

The Bill also proposes to make reinstatement the primary remedy for personal grievances. This means that if an employee raises a personal grievance, and requests reinstatement to their former position, the Employment Relations Authority must provide for reinstatement wherever practicable and reasonable.

There are several other notable changes to employment law coming up this year:

- Minimum Wage will increase to \$16.50 in April 2018
- Parental leave will be increased from 18 weeks to 22 weeks from 1 July 2018 (to be increased to 26 weeks by 2020).

Note: If you have any queries or concerns about the upcoming changes to New Zealand's employment law, call our office on 03 343 4419 to arrange a meeting.



Staff Changes

We have welcomed a new Solicitor to our team—Jane Taylor. Jane started with us in early February and has practiced in employment law for 7 years. She is available to meet with new clients and assist with a wide range of employment matters.

We have also welcomed two new Case Managers— Deb Abraham and Michelle Skinner. They are responsible for the daily management of client files and providing support to the rest of the team.

Employment Questions? Contact us for advice about:

- Employment agreements
- Trial periods
- Collective bargaining
- Disciplinary investigations
- Restructuring and redundancy
- Dismissal claims
- Workplace policies
- And more...