

dohr: People Talk

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HR Audit

At DOHR we believe in a proactive approach to managing employees. There is no point waiting for an employment tribunal to find out that you have not complied with legislation, codes of practice or best practice. An HR Audit is an objective way of understanding where your business is in terms of it's people management and the steps it should or could take to improve compliance and performance. A traffic light report is developed which clearly identifies risks to the business and the audit report will make recommendations for mitigating these risks. To find out more about an [HR audit](#) for your business, contact us on 01923 504100.

First Aid Training

20th January, St Albans

Recent changes to First Aid training legislation now means the one day emergency first aid training is now officially recognised and is now valid for 3 years.

We work with preferred partners, [Westminster Compliance](#), who deliver all Health and Safety Training and we urge all our clients and contacts to ensure that you are complying with first aid

Welcome - November 2010

With the end of the year now in sight, it is time to start planning for next year. Just as many of us make new year resolutions about things we want to do and achieve in our personal lives, we need to look back over the past year within our business, recognise our successes and failures and set our goals and objectives for 2011.

In this issue of People Talk we will bring you up to date on the recent and future employment legislation and urge all of you to 'be prepared' for an exciting, but challenging year ahead.

What's happening

The summer has been a very busy time for DOHR. I have been working with a strategic partner to put together a team of change management experts. We have pulled



together a fantastic team, not only from an HR perspective, but from a wider field of experience including finance, mediation and general management. We launched ourselves on 5th October with a webinar – Embracing Change: Are you a change Champion? This has been received incredibly well and we have received a lot of very positive feedback. If you are involved in any changes within your business, or are planning to make changes in the future, this is well worth a listen. You can now use the [On Demand function](#) to see what you missed.

DOHR has continued to grow it's core business of HR support and consultancy. We have taken on a number of new clients and are now looking to work with accountancy practices to help them keep their clients not only financially compliant, but compliant with employment legislation and HR best practice as well.

If you are interested in finding out more, please call Donna for an informal chat on 01923 504100 or download our [HR for Accountancy Clients information sheet](#).

Equality Legislation

The first of October saw the introduction of many (but not all) of the provisions of the new Equality Act 2010. The 'protected characteristics' which are covered include age, gender, race, religion and belief, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation and pregnancy & maternity.

The areas where employers need to be aware of changes and need to review their policies to ensure compliance include:

- the limited use of pre-employment health questionnaires
- an employee's ability to complain about harassment, even when it is not directed at them
- the restrictions on the use of pay secrecy clauses in contracts of employment

requirements. If in doubt, ask!

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- the employer's liability for harassment by a third party such as a customer or supplier

There are more provisions still to come, so make sure you remain up to date and if in doubt, ask!

Removal of the Default Retirement Age

From 1st October 2011, the Default Retirement Age (DFA) is being abolished. This means that companies will not, as a general rule, be able to have a company retirement age and will not be able to ask people to retire



(or they may be in breach of age discrimination legislation). If you have an employee turning 65 before this date, it is still possible to give them notice (a minimum of 6 months, following proper procedures) and have them leave on their 65 birthday. If you have an employee who is turning 65 after this date, it appears that you will only be able to remove them through a disciplinary / termination route. This is still an evolving situation, so stay tuned. In the meantime, contracts, handbooks and policies will need to be reviewed. Please [contact us](#) if you require assistance with this.

Paid Paternity Leave

From April of 2011, mothers and fathers will be able to share their leave and pay entitlements and choose who looks after the baby.



The 52 weeks leave and 39 weeks pay can be split between the parents so that once the mother returns to work, the father can take up to six months leave and be paid for it. The process has not yet been clarified for how to claim the payments and prove entitlement and there is still debate over the risks of discrimination cases with the difference between company maternity / paternity pay and statutory pay, but the creases will be ironed out and the entitlement is changing. [Policies](#) need to be written and processes developed.

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