

working  
with you,  
for you

# Stephensons

Welcome to Stephenson's quarterly employment newsletter where you can find the latest employment law news for HR professionals and business owners to ensure you are up-to-date and compliant with the law.

This issue includes:

- Our employment law services
- Ethnicity pay reporting
- What is a settlement agreement?
- Our employment law experts in the media
- Defending discrimination claims



**Phil Richardson**

**Partner and Head of Employment Law**

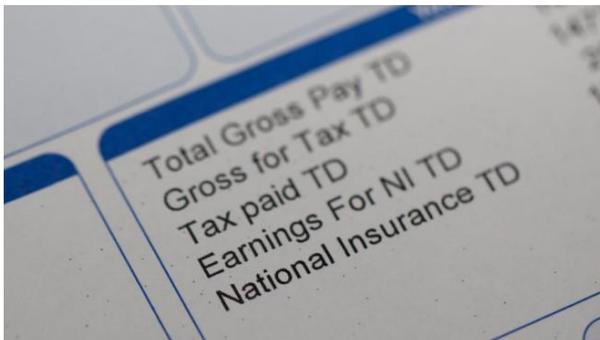
**Email**

**0333 344 4771**

If you require further information about any of our employment and HR services please visit [our website](#), [email us](#) or call **0333 344 4771**.

## **Ethnicity pay reporting**

Nearly one year after the introduction of mandatory pay gap reporting for gender, only around three percent of large employers voluntarily report on their ethnic pay gaps. However, fifteen key UK businesses have committed to ethnicity pay reporting ahead of any mandatory government measures.



Read more about the pledge these businesses have taken and whether or not legislation is likely to follow in our blog below:

**Read more**

## Employment Law Team of the Year

We are delighted to have won the award for Employment Law Team of the Year at the recent Manchester Legal Awards. The Manchester Legal Awards recognise and reward the best legal talent in the region and are organised and hosted by the Manchester Law Society.



Our employment law experts cover a wide range of employment law issues and can also provide your business with HR advice and support. We can help you with the following:

[Planning](#)

[Protection](#)

[Defence](#)

[Disciplinary issues](#)

[Discrimination claims](#)

[Defending employment tribunal claims](#)

[Grievances](#)

[Managing performance](#)

[Management of road risk](#)

[Recruitment advice](#)

[Redundancy procedures](#)

[Settlement agreements](#)

[Sexual harassment](#)

[HR Assist - small business support](#)

[Workplace plus](#)

[Employing an apprentice](#)

[Workplace pension schemes](#)

## What is a settlement agreement?

In our latest [employment law](#) video senior associate solicitor Martha McKinley discusses settlement agreements. Martha explains what a settlement agreement is, the importance of expert legal advice - whether an employee who has been offered a settlement agreement or from the perspective of an employer.

Martha also provides guidance on the sort of things a settlement agreement will include along with information on the cost of legal advice and the timescales involved.



For more information about [settlement agreements](#) and how the legal experts at Stephensons can assist please call us on 0333 344 4771 or [email us](#), including your contact details and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

## Our employment law experts in the media

Our solicitors are experts in their field and are often called upon by the media to provide comment on topical issues surrounding employment law. Here are some of the most recent publications they have featured in:



### Four in ten companies have reported a wider gender pay gap

Martha McKinley featured in an article in Personell Today where she commented on the growing gender pay gap in large companies in the UK. [You can read the article here.](#)

### Asda shopworkers win major ruling in equal pay dispute

Martha also recently commented on the Court of the Appeal's ruling that Asda's lower-paid shopworkers (who are mainly female) can compare themselves to higher-paid warehouse workers (who are mainly men) in pay claims. [Read more here.](#)

## Tribunal boots out HMRC claim football club broke minimum wage laws

Philip Richardson commented on Accountancy Web about the need for clearer guidance on legislation when an employee's salary falls beneath minimum wage due to deductions being taken for a benefit, for example in this instance, a season ticket. [Read the article here.](#)



Visit our [employment law and discrimination blog](#) for more expert comment on employment law issues and follow our social media channels to stay up to date with the latest legal news and our lawyers' reactions to breaking news.

## Defending discrimination claims

Discrimination claims can arise for a number of reasons. At Stephenson's we have an expert team of employment law solicitors, all of whom have a wealth of experience in helping employers defend themselves against discrimination claims. Click the image on the right to download our guide on dealing with discrimination claims.

Our latest blog focuses on relationships in the workplace and how discrimination claims can arise from employees if they are treated less favourably due to their relationship status:

[Read more](#)



### What to do if you receive a complaint

If you do receive a complaint, there are some steps which can be taken to ensure that the matter can be resolved as quickly and cost effectively as possible.

#### Do you know your obligations to service users?

Discrimination is the unequal treatment of an individual or individuals on the grounds of one or more of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Religious beliefs and;
- Disability

Individual service users are protected against such treatment which can be linked to one of the above characteristics and causes a detriment to them in comparison to others who do not hold it.

Allegations of discrimination can stem from an individual feeling that they have been treated unfavourably directly as a result of their protected characteristic. If direct discrimination can be proven then this can also justify claims of harassment under the act.

However, you must also be mindful that the stringent application of inflexible policies, criteria or practices across your client base, which can be considered to cause a detriment to an individual as a result of their protected characteristic, can give rise to claims of indirect discrimination. In cases of disability discrimination this can also include claims for failures to make reasonable adjustments.

If you do find yourself facing an employment tribunal our expert employment law solicitors can help, call us on 0333 344 4771 or [email us](#), including your contact details, and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

**Connect with Stephenson's on social media...**

