

# FISH PARTNERSHIP LLP

## FISHPAY AND FISHES EMPLOYERS NEWS BULLETIN

**September 2007**

### **PAYROLL SURGERY**

We are offering all readers of our Employers News Bulletin the opportunity of a FREE Payroll health-check. If you have any Payroll questions, or would like some basic general advice, then our Payroll Manager & Employers Advisor, Janet Ellis, will be available to meet with you, at our offices, during September and October. Many of you will know that Janet has worked for us for some time now, over eighteen years to be precise. During this time Janet has built up a wealth of Payroll knowledge and has considerable experience on the practicalities of running a diverse portfolio of Payrolls.

If you would like to take advantage of a free one hour consultation, which of course will be in complete confidence, please telephone Janet to arrange a mutually convenient time. As Janet is extremely busy we are limiting the number of free consultations during this period to ten. To avoid disappointment, telephone Janet on 01628 527956.

### **INCREASED HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT**

In our March 2007 bulletin we reported the changes to Statutory Holiday Entitlement. Since then, the Government has announced some last minute changes, increasing the timescale for implementing the increases to 1 April 2009. The two stage increase has been modified as follows:

- From 1 October 2007 - paid holiday entitlement from twenty days to twenty-four days per year.
- From 1 April 2009 - paid holiday entitlement from twenty-four days to twenty-eight days per year.

Employers will need to put transitional arrangements into effect if their holiday year does not coincide with dates of the increased entitlements. We have provided below a simple leave entitlement table which will hopefully help you calculate actual holiday entitlement during the transitional periods. Please use this as a guide and bear in mind that the entitlement of part-time employees will need to be pro-rata.

Please remember that the new entitlements will provide employees who work a standard 5 day week with four weeks paid holiday plus eight paid Bank Holidays by 1 April 2009. Therefore, if you currently pay your employees four weeks paid holiday **and** you also pay for the eight Bank Holidays, then these changes will not affect you.

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**LEAVE ENTITLEMENT TABLE**

<b>Leave Year Start</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
1 October	20.00 days	24.00 days	26.00 days
1 November	20.33 days	24.00 days	26.33 days
1 December	20.66 days	24.00 days	26.66 days
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
1 January	21.00 days	24.00 days	27.00 days
1 February	21.33 days	24.00 days	27.33 days
1 March	21.66 days	24.00 days	27.66 days
1 April	22.00 days	24.00 days	28.00 days
1 May	22.33 days	24.33 days	28.00 days
1 June	22.66 days	24.66 days	28.00 days
1 July	23.00 days	25.00 days	28.00 days
1 August	23.33 days	25.33 days	28.00 days
1 September	23.66 days	25.66 days	28.00 days

Clients who are unsure as to how the new entitlements will affect them, or would like us to check their calculations, please telephone either Janet Ellis or Julie Stroud on 01628 527956.

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## CV's or APPLICATION FORMS?

Employers are moving away from CV's in their recruitment process. Instead, they are asking job candidates to complete an Application Form. This is not another one of those changes for changes sake we so often hear about. There are real sound practical reasons for changing to Application Forms.

How often have you been faced with a pile of CV's all providing different types of information about the candidates and all in different formats. A simple Application Form (and it only needs to be simple) will provide the personal details of the candidates on the front page, with the exclusion of any potentially discriminatory information and the following pages will ask for details pertinent to the actual job vacancy. What you will then have is a pile of forms all providing the same information, in the same format, making interview selection that much easier.

Larger Companies who may require a Line Manager to make the selection for interview, can, if they wish, remove the front page providing personal details. This is a safeguard against them directly, or indirectly, discriminating against a candidate. They will select purely on suitability.

Although these days much of our work is generated by a computer, there are always times when documents etc. need to be handwritten. A handwritten Application Form will give a good insight into the neatness and clarity of the applicant's writing.

We can assist with drafting an Application Form template. Just call Janet, our Employers Advisor, on 01628 527956.

Finally, how often do you check out the validity of the information provided? If the job requires a full driving licence and the applicant states they have a full, clean licence - do they? If the applicant states they have a University degree in Business & Finance, which is a stipulated requirement of the vacancy - do you check this is the case? We advise all Employers to make basic checks to verify key requirements.

## IN BRIEF

A recent Court case clarified the 'ownership' of contact details kept by employees on their Employers computer systems. Typically, this could affect any employee who has an address list created and contained in Outlook. These belong, in their entirety, to the Employer and cannot be moved or copied. If the employee leaves, they have no right to contact anyone in their address list, including any private or personal addresses. If, however, they also have their private and personal addresses stored on their computer at home they would then be able to use them. We recommend that Employers review their policies and procedures, updating if necessary, to make sure this is clearly defined.

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*The Revenue currently have a backlog of over one million items of unprocessed post. With over 200 processing sites to close, and potentially 25,000 jobs to be cut by HM Revenue & Customs by 2011, there is little chance that any of us are going to receive a timely response to our letters etc.*

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## IN BRIEF *continued*

The National Audit Office reported more than a million people paid the wrong amount of tax last year. This is down to the mistakes of HM Revenue & Customs resulting in 540,000 taxpayers overpaying by £157 million, an average of £290 per person, and 500,000 taxpayers underpaying by some £150 million, an average of £250 per person.

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*The recent Government White Paper on pensions will make it obligatory for Employers to make contributions into employees pensions from 2012. Details have yet to be finalised but Employers can expect to pay 3% of salary into schemes, with employees making a 4% contribution and a further 1% coming from the Government.*

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Sickness absences have risen from 8 to 8.4 days per year, the first increase in two years. Those annoying odd days taken off by employees and called 'sickies' can be greatly reduced by having a firm but fair Sickness Policy and Procedure in place. If you would like assistance or advice on this subject, please telephone our Employers Advisor, Janet Ellis, on 01628 527956.

## FIRED OR SACKED??

To round off this quarter's bulletin, we thought readers may be interested to know how the above terms came into use.

Miners who were caught stealing coal etc. from their Employers had their tools confiscated. These were then burnt at the pithead, in front of the other workers, and became known as 'being fired'. Without their tools, miners were unable to work at other mines and repeat the offence.

Before the advent of tool boxes, tradesmen kept their tools in a sack. Termination of employment meant, in effect, you were 'given the sack', with which to take your tools home in!



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