

# Parish HR Support Service



Recruitment

New Employees

During Employment

Leavers

Data Retention

Employment Law Updates

For some time, the Diocesan HR department have provided HR support to Parishes on an ad-hoc basis. we are pleased to confirm that we now have a full package of HR Support for all Parishes to access. You do not have to use any of the guidance, templates or support, but it is available should you wish to.

The remit of the Parish HR Support Service is :

- To provide advice by email and telephone, to Parishes in respect of the full employee lifecycle from recruitment to the end of an employment contract;
- To provide updates on employment law changes;
- To provide support when navigating difficult employee issues such as:
  - Absence Management
  - Performance Management
  - Disciplinary
  - Grievances
  - Restructures, Redundancies and TUPE
  - Other queries;
- To provide template handbooks, policies, employment contracts and other documents which can be adapted to your own Parish.

***Please note that unfortunately, we are unable to provide "in-person" support to assist with recruitment, disciplinaries, grievances etc. All advice, support and guidance will be given over the phone or by email to guide you through HR matters.***

To access the suite of template policies, handbooks, letters and much more, please go to the Diocesan Website, click on "Info for Parishes" then choose "Parish HR Support Service" or click on this link: [Parish HR Support Services - Diocese of Coventry \(anglican.org\)](http://Parish HR Support Services - Diocese of Coventry (anglican.org))

To contact the Diocesan HR Advisor, Simone Smith please email [ParishHR@Coventry.Anglican.org](mailto:ParishHR@Coventry.Anglican.org) For urgent queries, please telephone 02476 521381 between the hours of **10am and 2pm**, Monday to Friday. If Simone is unavailable, please leave a voicemail and she will call you back as soon as she is available.

# Recent Law Changes

## **Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 – 1st April 2024**

Currently all employees have the right to request flexible working after they have been employed for 6 months. They can only make 1 application per year which can be refused only on the grounds of business reasons. From 6th April 2024 employees will be able to request the right to flexible working from day 1 of their employment. They can make 2 requests for flexible working in a 12-month period, and the time that the business needs to give the employee a decision has reduced to 2 months from the day after the application has been given to the employer. Another change that has been made is that the employee no longer needs to provide details about how the change will affect the organisation, and how to mitigate those changes.

## **Paternity Leave Changes - 6th April 2024**

From 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024, employees can now take 2 separate blocks of 1 week leave (Rather than previously having to take them together). They can now also take them within 52 weeks of the child's birth/adoption (rather than the previous 56 days). When applying to take Paternity leave, employees now only have to give 28 days' notice (down from the original 15 weeks' notice)

## **Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) – 6th April 2024**

Currently under the equality act, pregnant women and those on maternity/adoption leave are protected from discrimination on the grounds of their pregnancy. In lay terms this means that if you need to make redundancies during this protected period, and you cannot keep her on her original contract, then she is entitled to be prioritised for any suitable alternative vacancies if one exists. This protection only existed during the pregnancy and until she returned from maternity leave. However from 6th April 2024, pregnant women are protected from the day they tell you they are pregnant, until 18 months after childbirth. Similarly, those who are on adoption leave are also protected for 18 months from the date of adoption. If you have an employee who has taken more than 6 weeks of shared parental leave, they now also fall under the same 18 months of protection.

## **Carers Leave Act – 6th April 2024**

Carers leave will be implemented from 6th April 2024 and will give the right to carers to take one week of unpaid leave per year to care for a dependant and applies to:

- All employees starting from their first day of work.
- Dependents only. This includes spouses, partners, children, parents, siblings, grandparents or someone who lives with the employee who is dependent on them for care.
- The dependant is required to have long-term care needs, whether physical or mental

The Act also protects the employee from repercussions or dismissal in relation to requesting or taking carers leave. Any dismissal made on this basis would be automatically unfair.