



# HR Alert

Halliwells Electronic Alert from the Human Resources Group

## New Statutory Payment Rates Published

The Government has published the proposed new rates of statutory benefits to apply from April 2007. These include the new rates of statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay, as well as the new level of statutory sick pay.

- The standard rate of statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay will rise from £108.85 to £112.75 per week
- The standard rate of statutory sick pay will rise from £70.05 to £72.25 per week

## New Tribunal Award Limits in Force

The increased limits on Tribunal awards reported in our previous Alert take effect as from 1 February.

- The limit on the amount of a week's pay for redundancy and certain other purposes will increase from £290 to £310;
- The maximum compensatory award for unfair dismissal goes up from £58,400 to £60,600;
- Guarantee pay increases from the rate of £18.90 a day to £19.60 a day;

The new rates apply in cases where the event giving rise to compensation or payment occurs on or after 1 February 2007. In the case of unfair dismissal the increased limit will only apply if the dismissals take effect on or after this date. Where the dismissal or relevant event falls before 1 February, the old limits will still apply, irrespective of the date on which compensation is awarded.

## Bullying Big Brother-style in your workplace?

The recent media hype surrounding the bullying of contestant Shilpa Shetty in the Celebrity Big Brother house caused a public furore and a record number of complaints.

The ganging up of three contestants in the show against the only Asian person in the house outraged viewers.

However it has also brought the issue of bullying and racism in the workplace to the fore. It has been reported that the National Bullying Helpline has seen a phenomenal increase in the number of calls it normally receives.

In an interview published in HR magazine Personnel Today the helpline's founder, Christine Pratt, explained that most of the callers were employees who had linked what happened in the reality TV show with what they have experienced in the workplace.

The level of public awareness being so high it is more important than ever for employers to be alert to any sign of discrimination or bullying and investigate immediately. Otherwise, the employer not just the bully – could be held liable.

There are still a limited number of places available on our specialist **Bullying and Harassment** seminar which is being held this month:

- Liverpool, Tuesday 20 February
- Sheffield, Thursday 22 February
- Manchester, Tuesday 27 February
- London, Wednesday 28 February

All the above seminars are from 09.30 am - 13.30 pm.

The cost of the seminar is £95 plus VAT.  
Course notes and refreshments will be provided.

We do hope that you or a colleague will be able to join us and would ask that you RSVP to Jo Hancock either by email [jo.hancock@halliwells.com](mailto:jo.hancock@halliwells.com) or telephone on 0870 365 8912.