

# REGULATIONS FOR BUSINESS

Twice a year, on 6 April and 1 October, changes to regulations are issued by the Government. These are called common commencement dates (CCDs). These dates are in place to ensure that businesses know about any changes well in advance, and know when to expect them. Read on to view the key changes that came into force on 1 October 2007.

## Employment

### National minimum wage

The national minimum wage rate has increased.

For pay reference periods beginning on or after 1 October 2007, you will have to pay all eligible workers the following:

- £5.52 an hour to adult workers aged 22 and above
- £4.60 an hour to workers aged 18-21 - the development rate
- £3.40 an hour to workers aged below 18 who are no longer of compulsory school age
- £4.30 a day (a total of £30.10 per week) as the daily accommodation offset - the amount you can offset from the NMW rate if you provide accommodation for your workers

For detailed help telephone the National Minimum Wage helpline on: 08456 000 678

### Holiday entitlement

From 1 October 2007, the statutory holiday entitlement increased from 4 weeks to 4.8 weeks (24 days, if you work a five-day week). From 1 April 2009, a further increase to 5.6 weeks (28 days, if you work a five-day week) will take effect.

## Companies Act 2006

- a new statutory statement setting out directors' duties and responsibilities

- removal of the requirement to hold annual general meetings unless you decide to do so
- easier decision making by written resolution of the company's shareholders

## **Taxes & finance**

### **VAT invoicing**

There will be certain changes to VAT invoicing for businesses that sell to business customers in other member states and/or those who use Margin Schemes or Tour Operators' Scheme in the United Kingdom.

### **Health & Safety**

New workplace exposure limits (WELs) apply in the chemical and other manufacturing industries and coal-mining industries.

### **Environment**

If your business activities relate to primary food production, animals and/or the countryside, certain changes might apply to you.

### **Retail**

The sale of cigarettes

Anyone that sells cigarettes, cigarette papers or any other tobacco products must cease to sell them to anyone younger than 18. To fully comply with the law, all signs and vending machine displays must clearly show the new minimum age.

### **Trade marks**

All trade mark holders and applicants will find changes in the process for examining new trade mark applications and for opposing them. This means that new trade mark applications will no longer be automatically blocked if there is an earlier conflicting mark.

More information

For more detailed about the recent changes to regulations, visit the following websites:

- [Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform](#)
- [Department for Communities and Local Government \(PDF\)](#)
- [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs \(PDF\)](#)
- [Food Standards Agency](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive](#)
- [Home Office \(PDF\)](#)