

7 out of 10 employees are unaware of new law changes to flexible working

28 March 2024

A new survey from Acas has found that 7 out of 10 employees (70%) are not aware that the law is changing to make it easier to request flexible working at work.

The YouGov poll was conducted in January this year and found that 43% of employers were also unaware of the law change.

All employees who have worked for their employer for 26 weeks or more currently have the right to ask if they can work flexibly. A new change in the law will make this a right that applies from the first day of employment from 6 April 2024.

Acas has produced a revised Code of Practice on requests for flexible working to support employers and employees through this change and other reforms, which will be introduced at the same time on 6 April 2024.

Acas Chief Executive, Susan Clews, said:

"Our new findings reveal that most employees and more than 2 in 5 employers are unaware of the new upcoming law changes to flexible working.

"These new changes will be coming into force next week and it is important for bosses and staff to be prepared. Flexible working can bring many benefits in workplaces and the starting position should be to consider what may be possible.

"Acas has prepared a new statutory Code of Practice that will come into effect on 6 April, which addresses the changes and sets out good practice on flexible working requests."

The day one right to request flexible working will come into force on 6 April 2024. Additional reforms to the law on flexible working that are outlined in the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 will come into force at the same time.

Acas has prepared a Code of Practice on requests for flexible working, which includes information on:

- who should be allowed to accompany an employee at meetings to discuss a flexible working request
- the need for transparency about reasons for rejecting a request
- making it clear that employers should proactively offer an appeal where a request has been rejected

[View a preview of the new Code](#)

Media enquiries

[Contact the Acas press office](#)

Background notes

Acas has [advice on flexible working](#) and [training courses for employers about flexible working](#).

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. For the employee findings, the total sample size was 1,007 adults and fieldwork was undertaken between 4 and 10 January 2024.

For the employer findings, the total sample size was 1088 decision makers and fieldwork was undertaken between 8 and 15 January 2024.

The surveys were carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of British business size and region.

Participants were asked: Later this year, the law is changing to make it easier for employees to request flexible working at work. Before taking this survey, were you aware that this law was going to change?

The employee results were:

- Yes, I was aware: 30%
- No, I was not aware: 70%

The employer results were:

- Yes, I was aware: 57%
- No, I was not aware: 43%