

Resignation

1 . What to consider before resigning

Resignation is the process of an employee ending their employment contract. You might also call it 'quitting', 'leaving your job' or 'handing in your notice'.

If you're considering resigning because of a problem at work, you might be able to resolve it and avoid leaving your job.

You should also consider the effect on your income if you resign.

Dealing with problems at work

If you have a problem at work, you can raise it with your employer. It's usually best to raise the problem informally first.

If you cannot address it informally, you can raise a grievance. This is where you make a formal complaint to your employer.

[Find out how to raise a problem at work](#)

Effect on your income

Your income will be affected by resigning.

You should check your employment contract to understand any changes that could also apply to your final pay.

Your final pay might be different to your usual weekly or monthly pay because of things like:

- leaving part-way through a weekly or monthly pay period
- how much holiday you've taken
- money deducted for training courses

If you resign without having another job to go to, it could affect your entitlement to benefits or other financial support.

You can find out more about:

- [final pay when someone leaves a job](#)
- [calculators to help work out benefits you're entitled to on GOV.UK](#)

Resigning during absence

Your notice pay might be affected if you resign while you are:

- off sick
- on holiday

- on maternity, paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave

[Find out more about pay during the notice period](#)

Resigning during redundancy, lay-off or a TUPE transfer

Your pay and other rights could be affected if you resign during any of the following circumstances:

- you've been told your job is at risk of redundancy or that it will become redundant
- you've been laid off (sent home temporarily) or placed on short-time working (had your working hours reduced because not enough work is available)
- a TUPE transfer is taking place

Redundancy

If you resign when you've been told your job is at risk of redundancy or that it will become redundant, you might lose your entitlement to redundancy pay.

You should speak to your employer to try to come to an agreement.

[Find out more about when you're given notice of redundancy](#)

Lay-offs and short-time working

You can apply for redundancy and claim redundancy pay if you've been laid off or put on short-time working and receive less than half a week's pay for:

- 4 or more weeks in a row
- 6 or more weeks in a 13-week period

[Find out more about applying for redundancy during a lay-off or short-time working on GOV.UK](#)

TUPE transfer

If you do not want to transfer, you must tell your employer in writing. They will treat it as you resigning.

[Find out more about transferring to a new employer](#)

Get more advice and support

[Contact the Acas helpline](#) if you need more advice on resignation.

You can also speak to your trade union representative, if you're a member.

2. How to resign

Your employer might have a resignation process they want you to follow. Check your contract to find out. If it's not in your contract, you could ask your manager or HR department.

An employer cannot reject your resignation. However, you should always follow the right process so that you're not in breach of your contract.

You should talk to your employer about how and when other people are told about your resignation. For example, whether it'll be you or your manager who tells them.

Telling your employer in writing

You do not have to put your resignation in writing, for example in a letter or email.

However, it can be helpful to have a record that you're resigning. This can help avoid disputes, for example about notice periods.

Write to your manager or HR department unless you have been told to write to someone else.

Tell them:

- you're resigning
- how much notice you're giving
- what date you want to be your last day at work

You can use our [resignation letter template](#).

If you want a record that your employer is aware of your resignation, you could:

- ask them to confirm in writing they've received your resignation
- send a resignation letter by recorded delivery

Notice period when resigning

Your 'notice period' is how long you remain employed by your employer after you've told them you're resigning.

Your [written statement of employment particulars](#) must say how much notice you must give.

If you've been employed for less than 1 month, you do not need to give any notice unless your written statement says otherwise.

If you've been employed for 1 month or more and you're [legally classed as an employee](#), you need to give at least 1 week's notice, even if you've not been given a written statement.

[Find out more about notice periods when resigning](#)

Circumstances in which you might not need to give your full notice

In your resignation letter you should explain clearly your reasons for leaving.

If there's been a serious breach of contract, you might want to leave your job straight away instead of working your notice period. Doing this could be a breach of your employment contract, but it can be justified sometimes.

If you believe you must resign because your employer has seriously breached your employment contract, you might be able to claim [constructive dismissal](#).

Breach of contract and constructive dismissal can be complex areas of the law. [Contact the Acas helpline](#) if you have any questions.

Asking to leave before your notice period ends

If you want to leave your employment before your notice period ends, you could ask your employer whether you can:

- leave without working all your notice – you'd usually only get paid for the period you work, unless you and your employer came to an alternative arrangement such as taking holiday you've 'accrued' (built up)
- be paid instead of working your notice – sometimes known as 'payment in lieu of notice' or PILON
- be put on garden leave

Your employer does not have to agree to your request.

If you do not reach an agreement and do not work the appropriate notice, it might affect your final pay or references for future jobs.

[Find out more about when you're not required to work your notice](#)

Changes during or after your notice period

Check your employment contract to see whether it includes 'restrictive covenants'. These are terms restricting your actions during or after your notice period.

For example, your contract might state you cannot access sensitive business information during your notice period.

[Find out more about the types of terms in a contract](#)

If you've changed your mind about resigning

If you change your mind about resigning, tell your employer straight away.

Your employer does not have to accept your request to withdraw your resignation. However, they should give it serious consideration, especially if:

- you very quickly changed your mind about resigning
- it happened when your state of mind was affected by another factor, like a health condition or bereavement

3. Responding to an employee's resignation

As an employer, it can be useful to have an informal chat with your employee when they resign. This can help you both avoid any misunderstandings or disputes.

You cannot reject an employee's resignation. However, a conversation might help you find out if there are problems that can be resolved. This might be enough for the employee to choose to stay.

You do not have to respond formally when someone tells you they're resigning. But it's good practice to respond in writing.

Your response should include:

- that you've received the employee's resignation
- their last day of work
- what their final pay will be, including holiday pay and any deductions
- anything you expect from them before they leave

You can use our [resignation acceptance letter template](#).

If an employee asks to withdraw their resignation

Remember that an employee might not genuinely want to resign. For example, they might have made a sudden decision because their state of mind was affected by another factor, like a health condition or bereavement.

If they tell you they want to withdraw their resignation, you should:

- offer an informal chat to talk things through if they want
- be as understanding and flexible as possible

Arranging an exit interview

Arranging an exit interview can be useful to understand why the employee is leaving. Their reasons can help inform how you recruit or retain staff.

For example, if you find that employees regularly leave because the job is not what they expected, you could update future job adverts to be clearer about the role and responsibilities.

Exit interviews can also help to:

- find out if the employee left because they felt excluded or held back in some way
- deal with outstanding matters like handing over work
- give you useful feedback on what you could change in the future