



EMPLOYER NEWS 2019

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ACC WORK LEVIES ARE DROPPING

Employers and people who are self-employed will on average pay 6.9 percent less for their ACC Work Account levy over the coming two years. ACC levy regulations are determined through public consultation and will apply now until March 2021.

As a small business owner – ACC will automatically update your levy rate and you will receive an invoice later this year. You can find out more about the actual rate you'll pay by visiting www.business.acc.co.nz.

You will need to use a RealMe login to access this site, as you have recently done when setting up for Payday filing.

The site can be used to update your personal and business details, see how much you owe, view payment history and download current and past invoices.



HOW OUR JOBS ARE CHANGING

Waiting for the future workforce to turn up is 'dangerous' – it's already here.

People need to acknowledge the 9 to 5 workday is a thing of the past, a leading business innovator says.

Silvia Zuur, a director with the business advisory firm PwC New Zealand, says the advent of the gig economy (a market of short-term contracts and freelance work) means we are now "beyond the one career life".

"A gig economy that values and empowers individuals without relying on traditional hierarchy is liberating," she says. "It enables people the freedom to innovate and move beyond the constraints of the one career life, yet without a safety net it can also be brutal and inaccessible.

"How might we make working in this way safer and more caring than the 40-hour one career for life ever was?"

Zuur believes the future has already arrived: "It can be dangerous to think of 'the future workforce' as something that will turn up suddenly. It has started already; my career is drastically different to my grandparents.

"My generation is not motivated by a gold watch and a handshake, it is driven by purpose, we are recruited and contracted on human skills, not job titles."

Zuur says she has already seen a shift towards workers being more purpose-led and impact-driven, meaning they want to work by contributing to society on issues such as the environment, the economy, climate change and justice.



Source: NZ Herald

RETIREMENT

An employer cannot force an employee to retire except in very limited circumstances.

In employment law, there is no set age for retirement. The common age for retirement is 65, as this is the qualification age for National Superannuation. The retirement process is generally the same as for resignation. i.e. a period of notice is given as per the employee's employment agreement.

A good way to manage retirement is as a 'phased retirement'. This is where the employer, with the agreement of the employee, will reduce the retiring employee's workload over a period of time. It allows the employee to ease into retirement and transfer their knowledge across the business. This can be achieved using flexible work arrangements normally being a reduction in hours and/or days worked.

Retirement and Kiwisaver

Currently, employers are not required to make employer contributions for staff in Kiwisaver, who are over 65 years of age. This can mean an employee effectively earns less after their 65th birthday if the employer opts out at that point.

However, the coalition Government is apparently considering further extending mandatory employer contributions for the over 65s, as the current law is seen by some to be discriminatory.

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SET REST AND MEAL BREAKS

Employees must be given set rest and meal breaks based on the number of hours worked, to help them work safely and productively. Employers must pay for minimum rest breaks but don't have to pay for minimum meal breaks.

Employees are entitled to set rest and unpaid meal breaks that:

- Give them a reasonable chance during work periods to rest, refresh, and take care of personal matters
- Are appropriate for the length of their working day with the employer

Employers and employees can agree when the breaks can be taken. If they cannot agree, the law will require the breaks at set times, so long as it's reasonable and practicable to do so.



WHEN THE PAYCHEQUE IS ALMOST AS FAST AS THE FOOD



Workers in some American fast-food chain restaurants can now get expedited pay as U.S. restaurants grapple with a labour shortage that's not showing any signs of subsiding.

Restaurant chains are pulling out all the stops to attract and retain cooks and cashiers amid persistently low unemployment. Starting in June, eight Church's Chicken restaurants are offering employees half of their earned pay the day after their shift. The test will gauge whether the 50% is enough for workers, and the idea is to roll it out more widely going forward. It's not a loan, and there are no fees.

"It will give the employee the chance to get spending money quicker," Church's Chief Executive Officer Joe Christina said in an interview. "Some people just can't wait two weeks to get paid."

With an accelerating economy and the U.S. jobless rate at a 49-year low, restaurants are hurting. The dining industry is growing increasingly desperate to attract and keep quality employees, and simply raising wages isn't always enough.



Source: Washington Post

SUSPENDING STAFF

If an employee is alleged to have performed an act of 'Serious Misconduct', the employer can immediately suspend them with impunity. Correct? Well actually no, not always.

Actions of serious misconduct from staff does often justify summary (instant) termination of their employment, but nevertheless there is a very strict process to follow, and the suspension part of that is not always justified.

Suspensions need to be reasonably justified, and procedurally fair. Bearing in mind the dangers around pre-determining outcomes and jumping to conclusions, questions need to be asked around what threat the employee may pose, should they remain in their role. Is there any risk to the business from a Health and Safety point of view? Unless you deem a very real and immediate threat or danger may be present you may not be justified in suspending them. So just because you 'can' doesn't always mean that you 'should'.

Getting one part of this procedure wrong and the justification of your action or the employee contribution to the situation is often thrown to the wayside as you see the personal grievance succeed against you!



PAY RISES

Many workers said a low salary was enough to prompt them to look elsewhere.

A survey of 900 employers in New Zealand by recruitment firm Hays found 94 per cent expected to increase salaries at the next review, up from 92 who did so in the last review.

But they do not expect to give increases that are as big.

More than two-thirds of employers intended to increase salaries at a rate of up to 3 per cent. Just 6 per cent said they would give more than 6 per cent, down from 13 per cent who gave increases that size last year.

One in five expected to increase salaried by between 3 and 6 per cent.

But more than half of the employees spoken to said a salary increase was their number one career priority this year. Of that, 53 per cent said they would ask for a pay rise while 40 per cent said an uncompetitive salary had made them look elsewhere

Source: Stuff

CONTACT US

Perriam & Partners
 Unit 4, 35 Sir William Pickering Drive
 PO Box 20 222
 Christchurch 8543

Tel: 03 358 3108
 Fax: 03 358 3120
 Email: reception@perriams.co.nz

Visit us on the web: www.perriams.co.nz

