

## EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

### **ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)**

ACAS gives free confidential help and information on a wide range of employment issues through its National Helpline. The ACAS website has an A-Z of Work covering all sorts of employment related issues. It also has a specific section on Rights at Work. ACAS cannot give advice on personal situations or queries by email. Please use the National Helpline for these.

ACAS provides seven free e-learning packages to help individuals and businesses on: bullying and harassment, contracts and written statements, discipline and grievance, information and consultation, managing absence, redundancy handling and working parents. You can access these from the website by clicking E-learning on the home page of the website.

08457 47 47 47                    8 am to 6pm from Monday to Friday  
08456 06 16 00                Textphone Helpline, hours as above  
Website: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

### **BERR (Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) Department**

The BERR website has information on a wide range of employment related issues such as age discrimination legislation, employment tribunals, hours of work, individual employment rights, pay entitlement, redundancies, work and families, working time regulations etc. It also gives contact points for relevant Telephone Helplines.

Website: [www.berr.gov.uk/employment](http://www.berr.gov.uk/employment)

### **Child employment**

Contact the Education Welfare Officer linked to your child's school (other than private schools) or ring ContactEssex on 0845 6037627

Education Welfare Services, Room A204, A Block, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LD  
(01245) 436741

Email: [ews@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:ews@essexcc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk) – click on “Learning” on the top of the page, then click on “Schools”, then click on “Education Welfare”.

### **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)**

This is now part of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

Website: [www.berr.gov.uk/employment](http://www.berr.gov.uk/employment)

**Harlow Welfare Rights & Advice** – for specialist advice and representation on employment issues.

Harlow Welfare Rights & Advice (HWRA) is open each weekday from 10am until 4pm. Out-of-hours appointments can be made if necessary, and home visits are available for house-bound people.

2 East Gate, The High, Harlow, Essex CM20 1ND

(01279) 446622                    Inquiries during opening hours  
(01279) 446777                    For people in full-time work to leave messages if they cannot make contact during opening hours

Email: [admin@hwra.org.uk](mailto:admin@hwra.org.uk)

Website: [www.hwra.org.uk](http://www.hwra.org.uk)

### **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**

Their website provides answers to the most commonly asked questions about health and safety at work e.g. maximum and minimum temperatures; entitlements to breaks under the working time regulations; how to carry out risk assessments; safe working with VDUs; whether employers have to provide personal protective equipment etc. If you can't find the information you need on the website or need in-depth advice, ring the HSE Infoline in complete confidence. You don't have to give your name.

0845 345 0055 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5 pm.

Website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### **National Minimum Wage**

The minimum wage is a legal right which covers almost all workers above compulsory school leaving age. There are different minimum wage rates for workers aged 16-17, 18-21 and those aged over 22. These usually increase every October. To check on your entitlement, ring the Minimum Wage Helpline. This is also the number to ring if you think you are being underpaid and wish to complain. All complaints are treated confidentially. You don't have to give your name.

0845 6000 678 Minimum Wage Helpline

Email: from a link on [www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw)

Websites: [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk) or [www.berr.gov.uk/employment](http://www.berr.gov.uk/employment)

### **Trades Unions**

To find the right union for you and your job, call the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Know Your Rights line or look on the TUC website. You can search by employer name or by sector. Details of national trades unions are updated annually in Whitaker's Almanac, reference copies of which are kept in Harlow libraries.

You can also get general information on a whole range of work-related issues from the TUC Know Your Rights line and on the TUC website.

TUC, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS

0870 600 4 882 National rate phonecall, open daily from 8am to 10pm.

Email: Through a contact form on the website

Website: [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)