

**CIVIL LITIGATION DEPARTMENT  
EMPLOYMENT LAW  
JANUARY 2011**

**COMPENSATION LIMIT AND BENEFIT INCREASES**

From **1st February 2011**, the maximum compensatory award for unfair dismissal increases from £65,300 to **£68,400**. A week's pay (for basic award and redundancy pay purposes) increases from £380 to **£400**.

From **11th April 2011**, Statutory Maternity, Paternity, Adoption Pay and Maternity Allowance, will all increase from £124.88 to **£128.73** and Statutory Sick Pay will increase from £79.15 to **£81.60**.

**EQUALITY ACT 2010 - EQUAL PAY  
AND THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DUTY**

This Act was passed in October 2010 and the April 2010 newsletter dealt with the part of the Act dedicated to reforming and harmonising anti-discrimination law. The Act also covers 'equality of terms' (essentially the old Equal Pay Act) and had originally allowed for the possibility of an additional duty on employers with more than 250 employees to publish information showing differences between the pay of male and female employees. This part of the Act has now been dropped and the Government is asking those large employers to publish this information voluntarily.

The government has also dropped the proposed socio-economic duty on public sector bodies, which would have required all public sector bodies to consider tackling wide socio-economic problems whenever taking an important decision.

**UNFAIR DISMISSAL – QUALIFYING PERIODS**

The government is actively considering increasing the qualifying period to claim ordinary unfair dismissal from one year to two years. There is likely to be consultation prior to any decision.

**If you require any advice or assistance about an employment matter, please contact Julie Granger or Daniel Crook in our Civil Litigation Department.**

**Disclaimer**

**The content of this article is intended for general information purposes only and is not a substitute for specific advice. It is based upon our understanding of the legal position as at January 2011 and it may be affected by subsequent changes in the law. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss as a result of acts or omissions taken in respect of this article.**