

What's New in International Recruitment?

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Towards the end of last year, the Government announced several key changes to immigration rules affecting the hiring and management of overseas staff, set to take effect in 2024. These dates will now shortly be upon us, so we have set out a helpful summary of the changes below to help you navigate the new rules when employing overseas staff.

Key dates to note:

13 February 2024: Penalty increases for employing illegal workers

The fine that can be imposed for companies employing an illegal worker will increase substantially on this date. The current fine for first offences is a maximum of £15,000 for each illegal worker, which increases to £20,000 for each illegal worker for repeat offences. The maximum fines will increase to £45,000 and £60,000 for each illegal worker.

This increase in financial penalties makes it all the more important for businesses to ensure all right-to-work checks are undertaken correctly. It may also be a good time to take advantage of our [Right to Work audit service](#) so that we can help you to ensure that all of your right-to-work documentation is up to date and correct.

11 March 2024: Changes to rules on dependants for Health and Care Worker Visas

In December 2023, the Government announced significant changes to the Health and Care Worker Visa route, notably, those on the route would not be permitted to be joined or accompanied by a dependant partner and/or a dependant child. This rule will be effective from 11 March 2024 for those sponsored under SOC codes 6145 and 6146, care workers and senior care workers, respectively.

Where an overseas worker has been granted a Health and Care Worker Visa before that date and has already brought dependants to the UK, those dependants can remain in the UK. This includes circumstances where the worker needs to change their visa, such as extending it, changing employer (provided they remain eligible for the Health and Care Worker Visa) or applying for settled status. Dependants can also be brought to the UK by

those with a Health and Care Worker Visa granted before 11 March 2024 at any time before the expiry of that visa.

11 March 2024: Requirement for CQC registration

Another change taking place on 11 March 2024 that affects care providers will be a requirement for registration by the Care Quality Commission ([CQC](#)) for those wanting to sponsor workers under the Health and Care Worker route. Previously, CQC registration was not required, and this rule change appears to be part of the Government's tightening up of the use of the Health and Care Worker sponsorship route.

14 March 2024: Introduction of Immigration Salary List

The Immigration Salary List will replace the current Shortage Occupation List on 14 March 2024. This change does away with the general 20% going rate reduction to the minimum salary for shortage occupation roles and instead is expected to set an alternative general threshold discount. It's also expected that there will be a decrease in the number of roles on the new Immigration Salary List.

4 April 2024: Minimum salary threshold for skilled workers to increase

A change that will affect many employers is the increase in the minimum salary threshold for workers sponsored under the skilled worker route. This means that workers will need to be paid a salary of at least £38,700 to qualify for sponsorship as a skilled worker, a significant increase on the current threshold of £26,200.

Workers with a skilled worker visa before 4 April 2024 will not be subject to the new threshold when they need to change their visa, such as extending it, changing employer or applying for settled status.

The increase will also not affect workers on the Health and Care Worker route.

6 April 2024: Sponsorship Licence Renewals are no longer required

One change that employers will welcome is the announcement that sponsorship licence renewals will no longer be required after 6 April 2024. There'll be no more renewal fees to pay, and all sponsorship licences will automatically be extended for 10 years.

Contact us

If you have any questions about how these changes may affect your business or plans to sponsor overseas staff, please contact our [Business Immigration](#) team by emailing online.enquiries@la-law.com.