

Employment angles: (legal tips from Ken Allison, a consultant and speaker who specialises in exploding the myths and removing the anxieties about employment law)

Most members that employ people will be familiar with the possibility of losing an unfair dismissal or discrimination case and having to pay compensation to an ex employee. As from 29th February 2008, employers also face the possibility of up to two years in jail!

If you employ people you are responsible for checking that they have the right to work in the UK. If you fail to check you can now be fined £10,000, and if you 'knowingly' employ an illegal immigrant then a 2 year prison sentence may be beckoning. If you are a Director, you will probably not be able to blame the HR/Personnel Manager!

What to do?

- Check documents of every new starter (passport is the best, but others are allowed)
- copy the photo page and keep it on file
- if they have limited leave to stay in the UK, check at least every 12 months that their permission to work continues
- retain these documents for at least 2 years after the employee leaves

For further info go to:

<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/preventingillegalworking/>

All reasonable efforts have been taken to ensure that the advice contained in this article represents both best practice, and the law as it stands at the time of publication. It should not be relied on as a substitute for taking advice about specific situations.

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