



Employment law for event employers

The dates that matter to January 2027

Employment Rights Act 2025 changes for event operations in England, Scotland and Wales

OTAS Brief WF-002 | All levels: Operational • Tactical • Strategic

Correct as of 20 October 2026 | England, Scotland and Wales | Not legal advice | otas.live/insights/



The short version: what changes, and when

1 January 2027

Unfair dismissal after 6 months

- Qualifying period cut from 2 years to 6 months
- No cap on the compensatory award
- Applies if employment ends on or after 1 January 2027
- Even if notice was given before

Already in force

Sick pay, records, time limits

- SSP from day one, no earnings threshold
- Holiday records kept for 6 years
- Fair Work Agency set up
- 6 month limit for most tribunal claims

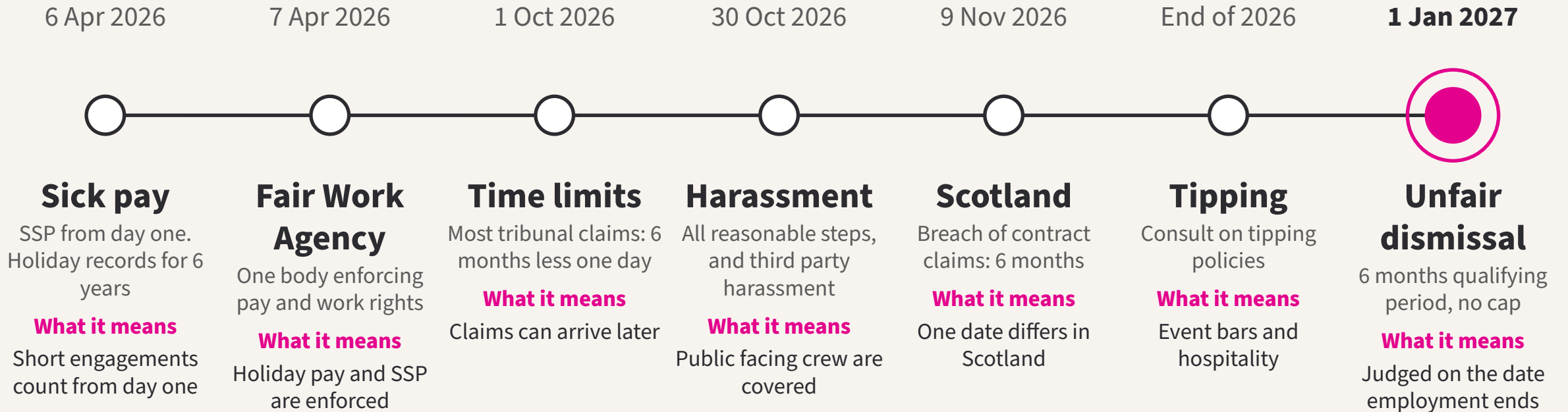
What to do

Plan crew service for 2027

- List who passes 6 months in 2027
- Review probation before 6 months
- Check payroll and records
- Take advice before any dismissal

England, Scotland and Wales. Dates as published by GOV.UK and Acas on 20 October 2026. General information, not legal advice.

Seven dates event employers need to know



England, Scotland and Wales (the SSP change is UK-wide). Dates as published by GOV.UK and Acas on 20 October 2026. The government says future dates may change.

Six changes event employers will feel most

01 • Since April

Day one sick pay

SSP from the first day of sickness, with no lower earnings limit

£123.25 a week or 80% of earnings

02 • Since April

Holiday records

Records of leave and holiday pay kept for at least 6 years

Enforced by the Fair Work Agency

03 • Since October

Longer time limits

Most tribunal claims: 6 months less one day

Contact Acas first

04 • 30 October

Harassment duties

All reasonable steps, and harassment by third parties

Crew facing the public

05 • 1 January 2027

Unfair dismissal

After 6 months, with no cap on the compensatory award

Date employment ends decides

06 • 2027

Guaranteed hours

Shift notice and pay for cancelled shifts, after consultation

Detail not yet published

England, Scotland and Wales. Dates and detail as published on 20 October 2026.

Seasonal and repeat crew: length of service

- **Continuous employment** The 6 months must be continuous employment with the same employer.
- **Weeks under contract** Each week governed by a contract of employment counts.
- **Some gaps count** For example a temporary cessation of work, or where by arrangement or custom you are treated as still employed.
- **It depends on the facts** A crew member on a series of contracts may, or may not, build up service.
- **Some reasons need no service** For example whistleblowing and some health and safety reasons.
- **Take advice** Before you decide not to rebook or to dismiss someone who works for you regularly.

Where it shows up at events

Seasonal crews the same people each summer

Long tours months on one contract

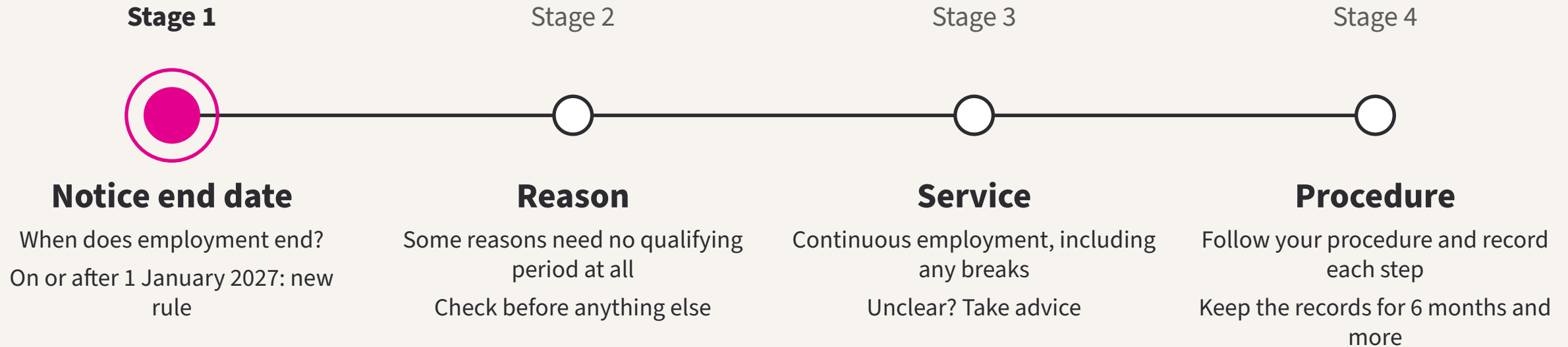
Repeat bookings regular shifts across a year

Payroll staff casual workers on contracts of employment

The point

Know who will pass 6 months in 2027 before it happens.

Before any dismissal from now on: four checks



The point: the deciding date is the day employment ends, not the day you tell someone.

6 months: the new qualifying period

6

months' continuous employment: the qualifying period for ordinary unfair dismissal from 1 January 2027. It is 2 years until then.

No cap. The limit on the compensatory award is removed from 1 January 2027.

Day one SSP. Sick pay from the first day of sickness since 6 April 2026.

6 years. How long holiday records must be kept since 6 April 2026.

6 months. The time limit for most tribunal claims since 1 October 2026.

Where notice runs into January 2027, the new rule applies.

Operational: what crew and supervisors can do

- **Report sickness early** Tell your employer from the first day. SSP can start on day one.
- **Keep your own note** Dates worked, holiday taken and pay received.
- **Know the time limit** England, Scotland and Wales: most claims 6 months less one day. Contact Acas first.
- **Supervisors: record it** Sickness reports, lateness and shift changes, accurately.
- **Raise concerns** Use the route your employer gives you, early.
- **Ask** If you are unsure of your rights, Acas gives free advice.

Whose job it is

Your employer runs payroll and records. You report sickness and keep your own notes.

What to expect from your employer

- Sick pay from day one
- Holiday records kept
- A clear reporting route
- Written probation feedback
- Records matter more now that claims can come later.

Unsure? Ask Acas before the time limit runs out.

Tactical: what crew managers and HR put in place

01

List your employees

Everyone on a contract of employment, with start dates and breaks

Keep: dated crew list

02

Flag 6 months

Who will pass 6 months' service during 2027

Keep: service planner

03

Review probation

Hold reviews well before 6 months and give feedback in writing

Keep: review notes

04

Check payroll

SSP from the first day of sickness, no earnings threshold

Keep: payroll settings

05

Keep holiday records

Leave and holiday pay, for at least 6 years

Keep: holiday records

06

Diary time limits

6 months for most claims. 9 November 2026 in Scotland for contract claims

Keep: case diary

Three levels: Operational for crew and supervisors, Tactical for crew managers and HR, Strategic for owners and directors.

Strategic: what owners and directors decide

Decision	What it looks like	Evidence to keep
Dismissals from now on	Treat any notice ending on or after 1 January 2027 as under the new rule	Adviser's note
Contracts and probation	Review contracts, probation clauses and procedures before the 2027 season	Updated documents
Sick pay budget	Budget for day one SSP across the crewing model	Budget line
Records	Holiday, pay and shift records you can produce for 6 years	Records policy
Harassment	All reasonable steps, including harassment by the public	Risk assessment
Ownership	One named person owns employment law changes	Named owner
2027 consultations	Track guaranteed hours, shift notice and umbrella companies	Watch list
Review	Review this calendar each quarter	Review notes

Points to discuss with your adviser, not legal drafting or a complete list.

What we don't know yet: 6 open points

01 • No date yet

2027 measures

Most have no fixed date. Timing depends on consultation

Now: watch GOV.UK and Acas

02 • Not found

Fire and rehire

Listed for January 2027. No commencement regulations found

Now: check before relying on it

03 • Not found

Trade union duty

Duty to inform workers, listed for January 2027

Now: check before relying on it

04 • Depends on facts

Seasonal continuity

Gaps between contracts may or may not break service

Now: take advice on each case

05 • Not yet made

Guaranteed hours

How the rules will apply to event crews

Now: track the consultation

06 • No figures

Sector data

No official figures on event workers affected

Now: count your own crew

Open on 20 October 2026. Check the official sources before acting.



Supporting Events
and Professionals
at every stage

Work with OTAS

Planning crew for 2027 and want your event operations ready for the new employment rules?

Request a call with OTAS to discuss how we can help

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Key sources: Employment Rights Act 2025; SI 2026/559; Employment Rights Act 1996; GOV.UK; Acas; Department for Business and Trade

Errors are corrected openly, on every format, and logged with the date.

General information, not legal advice. Correct as of 20 October 2026. England, Scotland and Wales.

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Briefing card • about 1 minute

“Quick update on how we work. If you are ill, tell me or event control as soon as you can, from the first day. Sick pay can now start from day one.

We record sickness, holiday and shift changes properly, so make sure your times are right on the sheet.

Report sickness to: _____ **Shift sheet held by:**

Concerns about how you are treated: raise them with

Any questions?”

Read at the start of the season. Fill in the blanks first.

Before 1 January 2027: the checklist, by level

Operational report sickness from day one; keep your own note of dates, holiday and pay; know the 6 month time limit.

Tactical list employees and start dates; flag who passes 6 months in 2027; probation reviews; payroll and holiday records.

Strategic advice before any dismissal ending on or after 1 January 2027; review contracts and procedures; budget for SSP.