

Overtime becomes part of holiday pay

7th November, 2014



Companies in the UK face a multibillion-dollar bill after a court ruled that overtime should be a factor in the calculation of holiday pay. This means the more overtime a worker

does, the higher his or her holiday pay should be. An employment tribunal said it was wrong for companies just to consider basic working hours when determining holiday pay. It ruled that thousands of companies must recalculate their holiday pay. Tens of thousands of workers can now make claims from their employers backdated to as long ago as 1998. The tribunal also stipulated that voluntary overtime and time spent being on stand-by for emergency call-outs should be included when calculating holiday pay.

Over 15 per cent of British workers do overtime. The British government has said the new change in employment law is unacceptable and "ludicrous". It said: "We do not believe voluntary overtime should be included in holiday pay and are concerned about the potential impact on employers." An organisation of British companies said the cost to businesses will be "unbearable" and may have serious implications for Britain's economy. A labour union was pleased with the tribunal's announcement. It said: "This ruling not only secures justice for our members who were short-changed, but means employers have got to get their house in order." It said it would fight for workers to "receive their full entitlement".

Sources: *Telegraph / Daily Mirror / BBC.co.uk*

Writing

Companies should hire more workers instead of requiring overtime from existing workers. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

multibillion-dollar bill / calculation / employment / working hours / voluntary / overtime / unacceptable / concerned / impact / businesses / serious implications / justice / fight

True / False

- UK companies face repaying millions of dollars of tax to workers. T / F
- A tribunal said it was wrong not to consider overtime in holiday pay. T / F
- Workers will be able to receive pay dating back to 1998. T / F
- Stand-by time for emergency call-outs will not be part of holiday pay. T / F
- The British government fully backs the new law. T / F
- A business organization worried the law could worsen the economy. T / F
- A labour union was angry with the tribunal's decision. T / F
- The union said it would fight to protect the government's rights. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. ruled | a. working out |
| 2. consider | b. specified |
| 3. claims | c. cheated |
| 4. stipulated | d. requests |
| 5. calculating | e. harm |
| 6. ludicrous | f. effect |
| 7. cost | g. decided |
| 8. impact | h. right |
| 9. short-changed | i. ridiculous |
| 10. entitlement | j. think of |

Discussion – Student A

- What are working conditions like in your country?
- What do you think of the new holiday pay rule in Britain?
- How much holiday should workers get each year?
- Should workers get longer holidays if they do overtime?
- How important are holidays to you?
- Should companies employ more workers instead of relying on overtime?
- How much overtime would you do every week?
- What should the rate of overtime pay be?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- Companies in the UK face a
- a factor in the calculation
- consider basic
- backdated to
- time spent being
- voluntary
- concerned about the potential
- serious implications
- members who
- receive their full
- overtime
- working hours
- were short-changed
- impact on employers
- of holiday pay
- entitlement
- on stand-by
- multibillion-dollar bill
- for Britain's economy
- as long ago as 1998

Discussion – Student B

- Do you think this rule is unfair on companies?
- Should the government help companies that get in financial trouble because of this law?
- What could companies give workers instead of holiday pay?
- What are the good and bad things about overtime?
- What are workers' rights like in your country?
- What are the good and bad things about labour unions?
- Do companies pay workers too little?
- What questions would you like to ask the tribunal judge?

Spelling

- Companies in the UK face a niilllumtobi-dollar
- the lintcuaaclo of holiday pay
- meiinegrtdn holiday pay
- kaddtaceb to as long ago as 1998
- rauoyvInt overtime
- meengyecr call-outs
- unacceptable and liudrcsuo
- the itepltona impact on employers
- the cost to businesses will be "naauebelbr"
- serious ainliscipmot
- secures suiejtc for our members
- receive their full emeieinttnl

Answers – Synonym Match

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.

Role Play

Role A – Health cover

You think health cover is the most important thing in a job. Tell the others three reasons why. Give three reasons why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a good desk, a nice boss or chances for promotion.

Role B – A good desk

You think a good desk is the most important thing in a job. Tell the others three reasons why. Give three reasons why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): health cover, a nice boss or chances for promotion.

Role C – A nice boss

You think a nice boss is the most important thing in a job. Tell the others three reasons why. Give three reasons why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a good desk, health cover or chances for promotion.

Role D – Chances for promotion

You think the chance for promotion is the most important thing in a job. Tell the others three reasons why. Give three reasons why their things aren't so important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a good desk, a nice boss or health cover.

Speaking – Job conditions

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- salary
- health cover
- good desk
- training
- chances for promotion
- holidays
- good boss
- nice colleagues

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.