Annual Update 2019:

SUBJECT	LEGAL CHANGE	ACTION REQUIRED
Family		
Paid leave available for those affected by domestic violence	Employees affected by domestic violence will be entitled to 10 days' paid domestic violence leave per year and can request temporary variations to their working arrangements. Effective date: April 1, 2019.	Ensure HR are familiar with the new rules and update relevant policies.
Trial periods		
90-day trial periods will be limited to bigger businesses	(1) Businesses with less than 20 employees will not be able to place new joiners on 90-day trial periods.	(1) Do not hire staff on trial period contracts if you are a small business.
	(2) Smaller businesses can still use probationary periods, but different formalities apply when terminating under this regime.	(2) Be aware that employees can still claim unjustified dismissal if their contract refers to probation.
	Effective date: May 6, 2019.	Immunity from claims is only available under the 90-day trial period regime.
Trade Unions		
Changes in union practices scheduled to take place	(1) Union Delegates will be given reasonable paid time off to represent employees and/or carry out union business.	(1) Where unions are present, update company policies and practices in line with the changes.
	(2) The 'duty to conclude bargaining' will be restored unless there is a 'genuine reason' not to.	(2) Ensure collective agreements do not breach the new legislation.
	(3) Employers must provide new employees with specific union information.	
	(4) The first 30 days of employment will automatically be covered by applicable collective agreement terms (if any).	
	Effective date: May 6, 2019.	
Litigation		
Reinstatement is required where practical	Where an employee is successful in an unjustified dismissal claim, courts must provide for reinstatement where practical and reasonable. This is an important change for 2019.	Be aware of the increased probability of mandatory reinstatement when dismissing an employee unjustifiably.
	Effective date: December 12, 2018.	
Working time		
Mandatory rest breaks have been reinstated	Statutory rest and meal breaks are now reinstated, with only limited exceptions.	Check and update contracts, policies and internal practices to ensure
	Effective date: December 12, 2019.	employees receive the required breaks.

This is a high level general update only. Legal advice should be obtained on specific circumstances.