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IRELAND ENACTS CASUAL WORKER PROTECTIONS

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12 Feb 2019*

A new law in Ireland aims to improve the security and predictability of working hours for employees on insecure contracts and who work variable hours. The [Employment \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act](#), which takes effect in March 2019, was [hailed](#) as “one of the most significant pieces of employment legislation in a generation” by the minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Key provisions:

- Require employers to give employees their basic terms of employment within five days of the start of their employment
- Prohibit zero-hour contracts except in situations of genuine casual employment or when they are essential to providing cover emergency situations or short-term absence
- Require a new minimum payment for employees who aren't provided with work for at least 25% of the time for which they must be available for work
- Establish a new right for employees whose contract of employment doesn't reflect the hours they habitually work. They will be entitled to be placed in a band of hours that corresponds to the average hours worked over the preceding 12-month reference period. Employees will be allowed to work for at least 12 months the average hours provided by the applicable band.
- Establish strong anti-penalization provisions for employees who invoke their rights under this law

Employers should review their policies and procedures to ensure compliance with these new requirements.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [Information on the Act](#) (Oireachtas)
- [Press Release](#) (Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, 18 Dec 2018)

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