

Employment In The Equine Industry



Anybody hiring someone, whether part-time or full-time to provide regular duties is an employer in the horse industry, for example, the hire of grooms, instructors, riders, drivers or yard managers.

Many employers are unaware of the most basic employment rights to which their employees are entitled. This is particularly the case in the horse industry due to the amount of informal employment contracts entered into, but employees may still have the benefit of such rights, even if there is no written contract.

Every employee is entitled to be provided with a written contract / statement of the main terms of employment within two months of commencing employment or upon request during their employment. It is important that contracts of employment are provided, ensuring both parties understand their position and basic entitlements. This will help resolve any disputes that may arise from lack of a contract.

The following is our guide on standard areas covered by contracts of employment:-

Job Description

Details of tasks expected to be carried out.

Pay

When and how much you will be paid.

Hours

Expected hours per day / per week and detail of any flexible working arrangements or overtime. Noting the Working Time Regulations (a maximum of 48 hours over a day 7 period) which can be opted out of.

Sickness

Time allowed for sick leave and when a doctor's note will be required.

Conduct

For example, no smoking at premises, politeness to customers.

Maternity and Paternity Leave

Entitled to leave when your baby is born. Maternity leave up to 26 weeks on Statutory Maternity Pay and option to take a further 26 weeks. Paternity leave up to 2 weeks.

Grievance Procedure

System in place to report any complaints you have about your working conditions.

Disciplinary Procedures

System in place for dealing with disciplinary actions and employees.

Harassment

System in place for dealing with harassment or bullying among staff.

Health & Safety

This policy should be detailed in the contract, including employer's liability for injury and vicarious liability.

Failure to comply with employment procedures and regulations can lead to unwanted disputes and financial penalties if the employers are found to be in breach of legislation.