Employment Rights Act 2025

Zero- and low-hour contracts – reps' checklist

Here's how you can help your members get the contracts they're entitled to.

1. Map your workplace to identify affected workers

- ☐ Build a workplace map now of who's likely to be affected when the new laws come in (expected 2027)
- ☐ Map where zero-hours and low-hour workers are based – which teams, what shifts
- ☐ Map where agency workers are placed – shifts and roles they regularly cover
- ☐ Highlight possible discrimination – check which workers with protected characteristics are over-represented in insecure work in your workplace and show the potential benefits of this new right in tackling workplace inequality.
- ☐ Plan your conversations with colleagues so you can get the information you need whilst sounding supportive, not nosey. One option is to say: "I'm making a list of people who may be entitled to a better contract next year – are you happy to answer a few basic questions so I can keep you updated?"
- ☐ Use this as an organising conversation to get non-members interested in the union

2. Explain the new rights to colleagues

- ☐ Once you know who's on ZHC/low hours/agency contracts, move quickly to explain the new rights
- ☐ Make sure workers understand what's changing and what they could gain

3. Gather evidence about hours and work patterns

After you've built trust with affected colleagues, ask them to share:

- ☐ Rotas
- ☐ Timesheets
- ☐ Payslips
- ☐ Ask them to keep a log of shift changes or cancellations at short notice

- ☐ Explain this evidence can be used to challenge the employer if necessary

4. Bargain for better than the legal minimum

Negotiate for:

- ☐ Shorter reference periods to calculate regular hours
- ☐ Contracts with better guaranteed hours
- ☐ More notice of shift changes or cancellations
- ☐ improved compensation when shifts are cancelled or curtailed

5. Stay up to date with the new regulations and case law

Regularly check these pages for updates:

- ☐ Zero-hour contracts factsheet
- ☐ Government implementation timeline update page