

# Employment

For employers and employees

We help resolve workplace disputes before they reach a tribunal. Clear advice on settlement agreements, dismissal, discrimination and contracts, from solicitors who tell you where you actually stand.



# Most employment problems are won or lost before anyone files a claim.

We advise businesses and individuals across England and Wales on the full range of employment law: settlement agreements, unfair and constructive dismissal, discrimination, contracts and handbooks, redundancy, restrictive covenants, and Employment Tribunal claims.

The right contract, a clean process, a settlement agreement signed at the right moment. We read the documents and the timeline, tell you the realistic outcome, and give you a plan that protects what matters to you. No hedging, no jargon.

Time limits in this area are short and unforgiving. Most Employment Tribunal claims must start with ACAS early conciliation within six months less one day of the act complained of where it happened on or after 1 October 2026, or within three months less one day where it happened before that date. The sooner we see it, the more options you have.

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## Who we act for

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Employers: contracts, policies, process and exits

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Employees: before you sign, and when it has gone wrong

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Directors and senior executives

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## What to expect

01

Advice for employers and for employees

02

Hourly rates published, with an estimate before substantive work starts

03

The deadline that applies to your dates, checked first

# Matters we handle

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## Settlement agreements

We draft, review and negotiate settlement agreements for employers and advise employees on terms before they sign. An agreement is only binding if the employee has independent legal advice, which we provide.

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## Unfair & constructive dismissal

We assess the merits of claims under the Employment Rights Act 1996 and defend employers facing them, and tell you early whether the qualifying period and the facts support a claim.

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## Discrimination

Advice and representation on discrimination, harassment and victimisation under the Equality Act 2010, across all nine protected characteristics — for claimants, and for employers managing risk and process.

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## Contracts & handbooks

Employment contracts, director service agreements and staff handbooks that are clear, enforceable and current. Good drafting now prevents disputes later.

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## Redundancy & restructuring

Fair selection, consultation and process for employers, and advice for employees on whether a redundancy was genuine and a package fair. We keep restructures defensible and on schedule.

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## Restrictive covenants

Post-termination restrictions that hold up, and advice on enforcing or challenging non-compete, non-solicit and confidentiality clauses — including urgent injunctions when a key employee leaves.

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## Employment Tribunal claims

Claims and defences from ACAS early conciliation through to final hearing, built to settle on strong terms or win at tribunal.

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## Grievances & disciplinarys

Support for employers through ACAS-compliant grievance and disciplinary procedures, and advice for employees facing them, so the process is fair and the record is clean.

# Services in this area

## Employment contracts & policies

The documents every employer needs on day one – and needs to be right. Contracts, consultancy agreements and the policies that keep you defensible.

### Employment contracts

s.1 particulars, probation, notice, pay, hours and benefits – tailored to the role.

### Consultancy agreements

Genuine business-to-business terms with IR35 status protection.

### Restrictive covenants

Non-compete, non-solicit and confidentiality terms drafted to be enforceable.

### Director service agreements

Executive terms, duties, and post-termination protection.

### Staff handbook & policies

Disciplinary, grievance, equality, flexible working, data and IT – kept current.

### Changing terms

Varying contracts lawfully, under the statutory Code of Practice on dismissal and re-engagement.

## Settlement agreements

A clean, binding end to an employment relationship. We advise employees on agreements they've been offered – usually at the employer's expense – and draft them for employers who need a certain exit.

### Advice to employees

Independent advice on terms and effect – and negotiation of the deal.

### Tax treatment

The £30,000 exemption, post-employment notice pay and pension contributions.

### Restrictive covenants

Reaffirming, varying or releasing post-termination restrictions.

### Drafting for employers

Settlement agreements, COT3 wording and protected conversations.

### References & announcements

Agreed wording so the exit lands the way both sides want.

### Without-prejudice negotiation

Using s.111A ERA 1996 pre-termination negotiations properly.

## Employment Tribunal claims

Unfair dismissal, discrimination, whistleblowing and unpaid wages – for the employee bringing the claim and the employer defending it. Where you stand, what it's worth, and the deadline that decides everything.

### Unfair dismissal

Ordinary and automatically unfair dismissal, and constructive dismissal.

### Whistleblowing

Detriment and dismissal for protected disclosures – no qualifying period, uncapped awards.

### Wages & holiday pay

Unlawful deductions, holiday accrual and the working-time rules.

### Discrimination

Direct, indirect, harassment and victimisation under the Equality Act 2010.

### Redundancy

Fair selection, consultation and pay – including collective consultation.

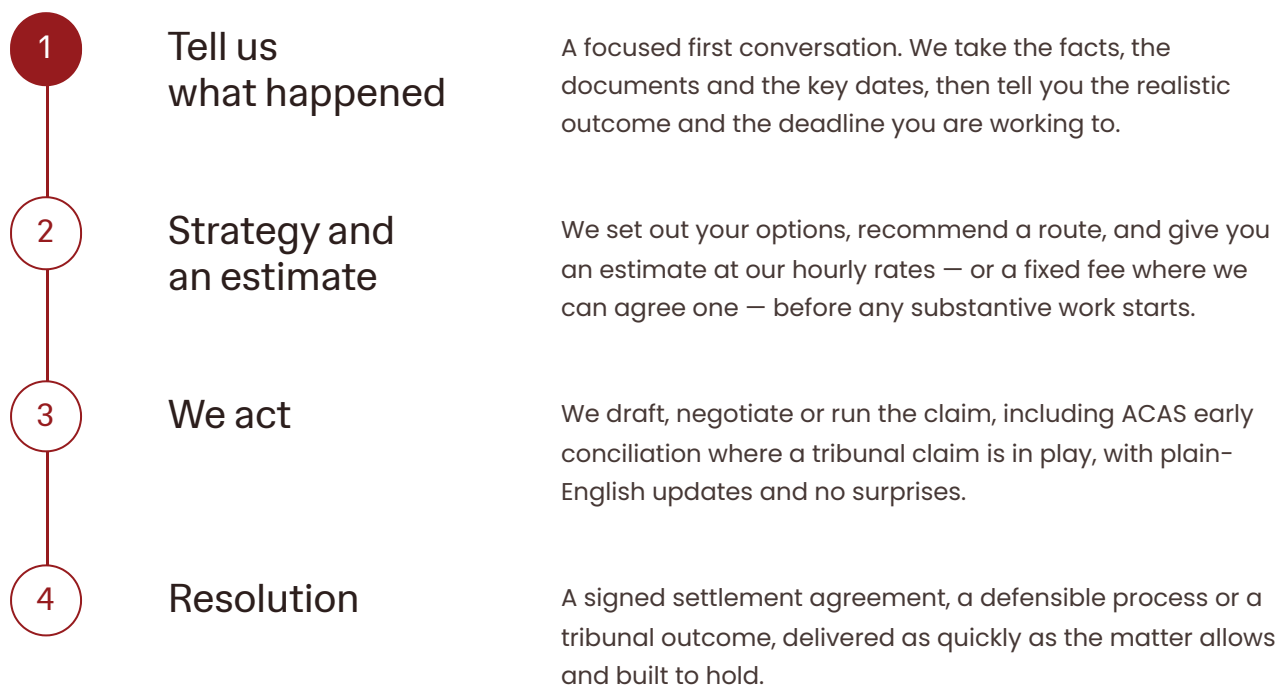
### Defending claims

ET3 responses, preliminary hearings, witness statements and settlement strategy.

## The Employment Rights Act 2025

Most claims about acts on or after 1 October 2026 have six months less one day; from 1 January 2027 the qualifying period for ordinary unfair dismissal is six months.

# A clear path, start to finish.



## Good to know

### Six months less one day

to start most tribunal claims about acts on or after 1 October 2026 (three months less one day before) — with ACAS early conciliation first, which pauses the clock.

### Two years, then six months

of service for ordinary unfair dismissal — two years where employment ends before 1 January 2027, six months on or after; none for automatically unfair reasons such as whistleblowing, or for discrimination.

### £30,000

of a genuine termination payment is free of income tax and National Insurance; pay in lieu of notice is taxed as earnings.

### Independent advice

is what makes a settlement agreement binding — and employers usually contribute to the employee's legal fees.

# No surprises on the invoice.

We work at our hourly rates and give you an estimate before any substantive work starts, or a fixed fee where we can agree one. Disbursements such as barristers' fees are identified and agreed with you in advance.

## Advice, documents and negotiation

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### Hourly rates

**£174 to £420**

£145 to £350 plus VAT, depending on the nature of the case and seniority of the person acting. We give you an estimate before we start.

including VAT

### Settlement agreement advice

**Quoted**

Independent advice on the terms and effect of a settlement agreement. Your employer will usually contribute to the cost.

before we start

## Unfair and wrongful dismissal — bringing or defending a claim

Unfair and wrongful dismissal claims — whether you are bringing one or defending one — are charged at our hourly rates, £145 to £350 + VAT depending on the seniority of the person acting. Before we start we give you an estimate of the cost of each stage, and we review it with you as the case develops.

### Bringing or defending an unfair or wrongful dismissal claim

**£174 to £420**

£145 to £350 plus VAT, by seniority — an estimate for each stage before we start, agreed with you and reviewed as the case develops.

an hour, including VAT

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Hourly rates range from £145 to £350 plus VAT, depending on the nature of the case and seniority of the person acting.

Our published fees, with the stages, timescales and disbursements for each, are at [ai-law.co.uk/pricing](https://ai-law.co.uk/pricing). We always agree your fee with you in writing first.

# Relationships that last.

“ Having previously used multiple solicitors across various matters, once we approached Ai Law we quickly established that they were experts in most areas of law. We subsequently gave the firm all of our business exclusively, and we haven't looked back.

Ai Law client

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Ai Law are a professional service provider that really knows what they are doing. They are an asset to our business.

Ai Law client

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These guys are constantly delivering their services. Donna is always on the top of all things and her team is very efficient. I have used their services before and again, they have not disappointed. I am certain I will use these guys again.

Lukasz, ReviewSolicitors, January 2026

## Recognition

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### Legal Team of the Year 2025 (joint winner)

Sunday Express Construction and Property Awards — in Property and Construction

### Royal Television Society Awards North West

Sponsor, 2024 and 2025

Rated 4.9 out of 5 from 111 reviews on ReviewSolicitors

[reviewsolicitors.co.uk](https://reviewsolicitors.co.uk), October 2026

# Talk to us

Tell us what you need today. We respond quickly to enquiries and quote requests.

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Ask **Ai Guy**<sup>®</sup>, any time. Describe your situation in plain English. Ai Guy, our AI assistant, gives general information about the law of England and Wales and points you to the right solicitor. ai-law.co.uk/ask