

### What is an information sheet?

Google says the definition of information is:

- accurate
- specific
- should give meaning and relevance
- should lead to an increase in understanding
- should lead to a decrease in uncertainty

*Information is valuable because it can affect behavior, a decision, or an outcome.*

### How should the information page be laid out?

- One page is best
- Make it readable - use at least 12 point font
- Keep the text brief
- Keep the most important information in the first paragraph
- Use bullets when you can
- Leave lots of white space
- Make it very clear what you want them to know
- Use bold, text boxes, and graphics/pictures to add emphasis

What does it mean for an employee to have rights and responsibilities?

Your rights as an employee to work in a safe and healthy environment are given to you by law and generally can't be changed or removed by your employer. The most important of these rights are:

- as far as possible, to have any risks to your health and safety properly controlled
- to be provided with any personal protective and safety equipment free of charge
- to stop work and leave your work area, without being disciplined if you have reasonable concerns about your safety
- to tell your employer about any health and safety concerns you have
- not to be disciplined if you contact the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI), or your local authority, if your employer won't listen to your concerns
- to have rest breaks during the working day
- to have time off from work during the working week
- to have annual paid holiday.

### Contract of employment

All employees have an employment contract with their employer. A contract is an agreement that sets out an employee's:

- employment conditions
- rights
- responsibilities
- duties

These are called the 'terms' of the contract.

Employees and employers must stick to a contract until it ends (eg by an employer or employee giving notice or an employee being dismissed) or until the terms are changed (usually by agreement between the employee and employer).

If a person has an agreement to do some work for someone (like paint their house), this isn't an employment contract but a 'contract to provide services'.

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions/overview>

### Minimum wage

The National Minimum Wage rate per hour depends on your age and whether you're an apprentice - you must be at least school leaving age to get it.

	21 and over	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice*
2014 (current rate)	£6.50	£5.13	£3.79	£2.73

\*This rate is for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their age.

The rates are usually updated every October, so the current rates apply from October 2014.

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

### Working time regulations

The law says that workers don't usually have to work more than 48 hours a week on average, unless they choose to. This law is sometimes called the 'working time directive' or 'working time regulations'.

Some sectors have specific rules for their own workers.

Normal working hours should be set out in the employment contract or written statement of employment details.

Workers 18 or over who want to work more than 48 hours a week, can choose to opt out of the 48-hour limit. It must be voluntary and in writing.

<https://www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours/overview>

### Where to seek help on employment issues

#### Labour Relations Agency (LRA) Helpline

028 9032 1442 (Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm)

The LRA offers pre-claim conciliation and free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment issues.

If you are a trade union member, you can contact your trade union representative for advice and support on employment issues.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) can provide free and impartial advice.

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-a-problem-at-work>

### The right to confidentiality

As an employee you have rights, by law, to your own privacy. According to the law that stands today, there are three main privacy rights that employees have

1. use of telephone and email,
2. surveillance
3. the right to protect personal data

An employer needs to follow the guidelines outlined in the Human Rights Act and respect the private life of an employee.

If an employer does not comply with these rules then they are in breach of the Data Protection Act.

The protection of personal data is very important. It is important to keep employee information and files away from public access.

Protecting the privacy of an employee is incredibly important when you are an employer.

Whether you are an employer or an employee, it's important to know your privacy rights in the workplace so that you make sure you are not in breach of any regulations.

<http://www.is4profit.com/business-advice/business-law/employee-privacy-know-the-law.html>

### Equal opportunities

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination in employment or in the provision of training and education on the grounds of any of the following protected characteristics:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race, religion or belief,
- sex, and sexual orientation.

Staff and students are protected in all aspects of the employment, education and/or training relationship.

<http://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/equal-opportunities/equal-opportunities-equality-legislation>

### Disciplinary procedure

A disciplinary procedure is sometimes the best way for your employer to tell you when something is wrong. It allows them to explain clearly what improvement is needed and should give you an opportunity to put your side of the situation.

Your employer must put their disciplinary procedure in writing, and make it easily available to you. It should include the rules, what performance and behaviour might lead to disciplinary action, and what action your employer might take.

During a disciplinary procedure, if your employer does anything that seems unreasonable you should tell them (in writing) and suggest ways to solve the problem. They may decide to carry on the procedure anyway, in which case you might decide to use the issue as grounds for an appeal.

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/disciplinary-procedures-introduction>

### Statutory Sick Pay

To qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) you must:

- be classed as an employee and have done some work for your employer
- have been ill for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days)
- earn at least £111 (before tax) per week
- tell your employer you're sick before their deadline - or within 7 days if they don't have one

You can get £87.55 per week Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you're too ill to work. It's paid by your employer for up to 28 weeks.

You need to qualify for SSP and have been off work sick for 4 or more days in a row (including non-working days).

You can't get less than the statutory amount. You can get more if your company has a sick pay scheme (or 'occupational scheme') - check your employment contract.

<https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility>