

ACCELERATE

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OUR NEWSLETTER FOR GROWING BUSINESSES



You could be selling the most innovative product on the market, using slick systems and the hottest marketing campaign in town, but if you don't have good people - good luck!

People are everything in business. That's why it's so important to know your employer responsibilities and how to manage the employment process to ensure high productivity, a solid reputation, and attract and retain staff that love their work. This month, find out what you need to do regarding domestic violence leave, payday filing and get HR tips to keep you and your staff smiling.

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Heard about the new Domestic Violence - Victims' Protection Bill?

Here's what it means for you.

Imagine trying to work while juggling court, counselling, and your family's needs following a domestic violence incident. This is the situation for thousands of Kiwis, but it's set to improve with the new *Domestic Violence - Victims' Protection Bill* coming into effect on 1 April. The law enables people affected by family violence to apply for specific leave and flexible working arrangements to help them keep their jobs during a challenging time.

What does this mean for you?

Local companies such as Countdown, The Warehouse and ANZ already offer domestic violence leave - and it's time for the rest of the country to follow suit. As an employer, you need to be aware of what leave and flexible working arrangements victims of domestic abuse are entitled to, what you have to do, and how to support your staff.

10 days' domestic violence leave

Employees will be able to apply for up to 10 days' domestic violence leave per year to deal with the effects of domestic violence, such as court appearances, doctor visits and looking after children.

- Employees need six months' continuous employment to be entitled to this leave and entitlement does not accrue from year to year.
- Staff don't need to provide proof they have been affected by domestic violence, but employers can ask for proof before agreeing to the request.
- If an employee fails, without reasonable excuse, to provide proof, their employer isn't required to pay for any domestic violence leave.

More flexibility at work

To support staff affected by family violence, you are required to provide flexible working conditions, such as changes to:

- The location of their workplace
- Their duties at work
- The extent of contact details the employee must provide to their employer
- Any other term of employment that needs variation to enable the employee to deal with the effects of domestic violence.

Stay open-minded and make a plan

Now's the time to think about how you'll approach requests for domestic violence leave. It's a good idea to put together a practical plan to ensure you respect and protect your staff members' privacy throughout the process. Keep in mind you could get requests for leave for a range of reasons including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, harassment, threats, intimidation and financial abuse. If you need help putting together a plan, please call us.

#FACT

New Zealand police respond to 270 domestic violence incidents every day and it's estimated that's only the tip of the iceberg - with 80% of incidents going unreported.

#FACT

Did you know domestic violence already costs New Zealand workplaces at least \$368 million a year due to higher turnover and lost productivity? Addressing the problem directly will be better for business and victims of domestic abuse.



It's time to gear up for payday filing

You'll need to be payday filing by 1 April when it becomes compulsory. Now's the time to work out how you're going to integrate it into your payroll processes and save time on your tax obligations.

Payday filing means you need to:

- File employment information every payday instead of an Employer monthly schedule (IR348).
- Provide new and departing employees' address information, as well as their date of birth - if they have provided it to you.
- File electronically (from payday compatible software or through myIR) if your annual PAYE/ESCT is \$50,000 or more.

Remember, the due date for payment remains the same at the 20th of the month (or 5th and 20th of the month for twice-monthly filers).

How do I payday file?

There are three ways to file electronically - direct from payroll software, file upload from myIR or onscreen via myIR.

How do I shift over to payday filing?

1. Review your payroll processes and plan and schedule when to shift.
2. Ask your software provider when they'll have payday filing compatible software (Xero and MYOB already do, Ace Payroll & iPayroll will be available in March).
3. If you're using myIR to file, let the IRD know you're switching to payday filing in myIR.

Need to know how payday filing works for schedular payments, shadow payrolls, employee share schemes and holiday pays? Let us know and we'll talk you through it.

Payroll Pain Relievers

With New Zealand ranking as one of the most complex payroll environments in the world, it's no wonder many Kiwi employers choose to offload payroll headaches to bookkeepers, accountants, or payroll intermediaries. This trend is picking up steam: with Inland Revenue's "Payday Filing" scheme kicking off 1 April 2019, instead of reporting PAYE to Inland Revenue on the 20th of the following, employers will need to report every payday.

If you'd like us (or whoever helps you with your payroll) to take care of payroll calculations so you don't need to spend time becoming a holiday pay guru, we could migrate you onto a platform like iPayroll - Payday Filing headaches sorted!

iPayroll are a NZ based firm, providing an online payroll program, with a super friendly and helpful support team who are just a phone call away. They can assist you with getting your payroll set up and then provide fantastic support if/when you need it. Have a look at ipayroll.co.nz for more information.

What if I file paper returns?

It is possible to seek an exemption so that you can continue to file on paper if:

- You have limited digital services available to you or they're not very reliable in your area
- You don't use a computer or you're not very confident using one
- The costs you would incur complying with online filing would be unreasonable in the circumstances

Inland Revenue can set a time limit on an exemption like this or cancel it with six months' notice, so it is definitely worth considering your electronic options at a time like this...



PASSION LED US HERE



Business Health Check

Six ways to 'do good' by your staff

- Celebrate! Write down one thing you'll do in the next six months to reward your team.
- Book in staff performance meetings now because setting and revisiting KPIs ensures everyone's on track.
- Lock in 30-minutes to revisit your strategic plan this month. List three things you can do as a team to stay competitive and grow your business.
- Write the steps you'll take when processing an application for domestic violence leave before 1 April. Not sure where to start? Call us.
- Need new staff or promoting someone? Make sure job descriptions accurately reflect staff positions to avoid confusion and misunderstandings.
- Inspire employees by offering professional development training in 2019 - a great way to grow your people and your business!

Hiring? Look for traits not talent


Soft skills are the personal qualities that make people easy to work with and they're key for business success. Here are six important soft skills and the best open-ended interview questions you can ask to help find out whether a candidate is right for your business.

Communication	Give me an example of when you had to deal with a difficult team member. What did you do to communicate properly?
Adaptability	Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something for the first time. How did you react? What did you learn?
Culture fit	What three things are most important to you in a job?
Collaboration	Tell me about a time when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. How did you handle interactions with them?
Time management	Describe a time you fell behind schedule. What went wrong and what would you do differently next time?

KEY TAX DATES MARCH 2019

DATE	CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
5 March	PAYE	Large employers payment due Large employers returns for those who have not yet opted in to payday filing
20 March	RWT	RWT return and payment due for deductions from dividends and deductions of \$500 or more from interest paid during February
20 March	PAYE	Payment due for small employers for February, and large employers for March Returns for small and large employers who have not yet opted in to payday filing
20 March	NRWT / Approved Issuer Levy	Payment and return for February
28 March	GST	Return and payment for February

Disclaimer: This publication has been carefully prepared, but it has been written in general terms only. The publication should not be relied upon to provide specific information without also obtaining appropriate professional advice after detailed examination of your particular situation.



While sorting your end of year tax paperwork sounds about as fun as spilling coffee on your keyboard, once it is done, it's done — and now's the time.

With not long until year-end, we encourage you to spend a few minutes this week reading our top tax tips plus the latest changes you need to be aware of in 2019.

10 smart year-end tax tips

Fill your drawers: Can you stock up on stationery, postage and courier bags before 31 March? Claim now and save.

Staff expenses: If you owe employees holiday pay, bonuses, long service leave or redundancy payments, you can claim for these now — as long as they are paid within 63 days of the balance date.

Can you fix it? If you've got any significant maintenance or repairs on the cards, do it before year-end and save on tax.

Turn fun into savings: Do you know which entertainment expenses you can claim 100% of? It's worth finding out — ask us if you need clarification.

Look at your fixed assets: Do you have any you're no longer using or don't plan to use in the future? If so, you may be able to write off the book value.

While you're at it, check your stock: Look at your stock as well, especially obsolete stock. There may be an opportunity to write off some of this off as well — check with us on what could be done in this area.

Income boost: Earned a lot more this year? Consider making a voluntary provisional tax payment.

Logging car use? Remember to jot down your odometer reading at year-end and if you've kept a logbook of business and personal use, mileage and costs, good work!

Home office: It's also a good time to review what home office expenses may be available for deduction, especially your home office. We can help with calculating this.

Saving time saves money! Accountants are required to ask for information to comply with AML-DIA obligations plus the IRD may ask you, via your accountant, for extra information in relation to your EOY tax. Having your identification and tax documents collated and correct saves your accountant time. Which saves you money, so get started this week.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE WORLD OF TAX?

Payday filing

Don't forget payday filing for employers is compulsory from 1 April 2019. Please contact us if you need any help with complying with the new process and rules.

No more cheques for IRD

Do you send post-dated cheques for tax payments? It's time to go digital! From now on you'll need to use online banking to make future-dated payments as the IRD no longer accepts post-dated cheques. Plus, if you're one to put your tax payments in the IRD's dropboxes, you'll now have to head to an IRD office reception area (during office hours) to do so.

Writing off bad debt? Get your ducks in a row.

If you're expecting a tax break from writing off bad debt, you may also expect to hear from the IRD asking you to prove the debt is, in fact, bad. A new ruling means the IRD could request evidence of any steps you took to recover the debt (before writing it off) and proof there is no reasonable likelihood the debt will be paid. So, get your paperwork in order!



TAKE NOTE! MINIMUM WAGE GLIDES CLOSER TO \$20

More than 200,000 New Zealanders and their families will benefit from the minimum wage going up to \$17.70 an hour on 1 April 2019 — an increase of \$1.20. The starting-out and training minimum wage rates will increase from \$13.20 to \$14.16 per hour (remaining at 80% of the adult minimum wage) and the Government has set indicative rates of \$18.90 from 1 April 2020 and \$20 from 1 April 2021.

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