

Trade Union Representation

All workers now have the right to join a union, and 700,000 join every year. 740,000 workers have been given new rights to union representation at grievance and disciplinary hearings. For more information, call the Trade Union Congress Know Your Rights Line on 0870 600 48 82.

Trade Union Recognition

The Employment Relations Act has led to a 50% increase in trade union recognition deals, with 700,000 workers benefiting from the outlaw of discrimination against union members. For more information, call the Know Your Rights Line on 0870 600 48 82.

Support for Part-Time Workers

Part-time workers now enjoy the same rights as full-time workers, including equal hourly pay, access to pensions and holiday entitlements, and entitlement to contractual sick-pay. This allows flexible working patterns and helps ensure a healthy work-life balance. For any queries, call the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) on 08457 47 47 47.

Useful Contacts At-a-Glance

National Minimum Wage	0845 6000 678
Tax Credits	0845 300 3900
New Deal	0845 606 2626
Maternity, Paternity and Adoptive Leave and Pay	08457 143 143
Sure Start Maternity Grant	01536 343 000
Free Childcare Information	01604 828 400
Trade Union Know Your Rights Line	0870 600 4882
ACAS	08457 47 47 47



What the government is doing for people at work

A guide for people at work in Corby and East Northamptonshire

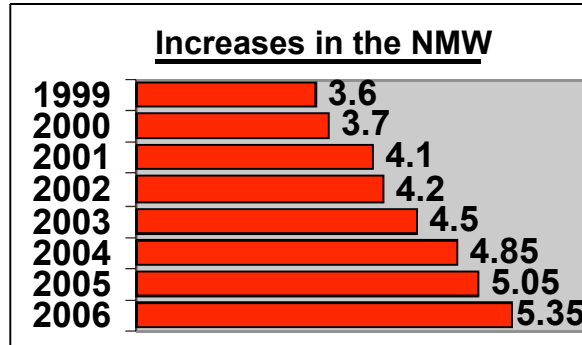


'This guide provides information about the rights and protection for people at work, including the national minimum wage, family friendly employment and trade union support. I hope it will be helpful.'

Phil Hope MP
Corby and East Northamptonshire

National Minimum Wage

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) means that by law employers must pay workers a minimum amount. It helps more than 1.6 million people by providing a decent minimum standard and ensuring fairness in the workplace. Over the past six years it has increased by 35% (see graph). From **October 2006** it will increase again from £5.05 to **£5.35**. For further help and information call the National Minimum Wage Helpline on 0845 6000 678.



Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

The Working Tax Credit helps make work pay by encouraging people into employment. The Child Tax Credit works with Child Benefit to help parents. Together Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit help 6 million families. Entitlement depends on your circumstances, but you may be eligible for up to £6,920 a year. Call the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3900 for more information and to apply.

New Deal

The New Deal is a Government programme that **aims to give unemployed people the help and support they need to get into work**. Everyone on New Deal gets a personal adviser who is their point of contact throughout the programme. The personal adviser takes the time to understand you - your experiences, interests and goals - so a plan can be prepared to get you into a suitable job.

Since it was introduced in 1997 **the New Deal has helped over 1 million people into work**, including 518,000 young people who have boosted the economy by £500 million. For more information call the New Deal Helpline on 0845 606 26 26.

Maternity, Paternity and Adoptive Leave and Pay

The Government has increased maternity pay to **£108.85 a week** (up from £55 in 1997) and extended paid maternity leave from 18 weeks to six months. Mothers are now entitled to **26 weeks' paid maternity leave**, and a **further 26 weeks' unpaid leave** provided you have been employed by the same employer for 26 weeks by the 15th week before your baby is due

Rights to **paternity leave and pay** were introduced in **April 2003** to allow fathers to care for their baby or to support the mother following birth. Fathers can take either **one week's or two consecutive weeks' paternity leave** and during this time **may be entitled to £108.85 per week Statutory Paternity Pay**.

As a **working adoptive parent** you may be entitled to **26 weeks paid adoptive leave** at the time you adopt and an **additional 26 weeks unpaid adoptive leave** after that. Call 08457 143 143 for information on Maternity, Paternity and Adoptive leave and pay.

Childcare Costs

All 3 and 4 year-olds are now eligible for free childcare, and since 1997 more than 920,000 childcare places have been created, benefiting over 1.6 million children. In Northamptonshire Local Education Authority 13,000 free childcare places have been taken up. For childcare queries call the Northamptonshire Children's Information Service on 01604 828 400.

Pension Protection

In April 2005, the Government introduced the **Pension Protection Fund** to end the scandal of pensioners being denied the pension they have built and to restore confidence in the pensions system. Now 10 million members of salary-related pension schemes know that they will **receive compensation** if their employer becomes insolvent and the pension scheme is under-funded. To find out more call 0845 600 2541.