



**EMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES**

*Moving forward together*

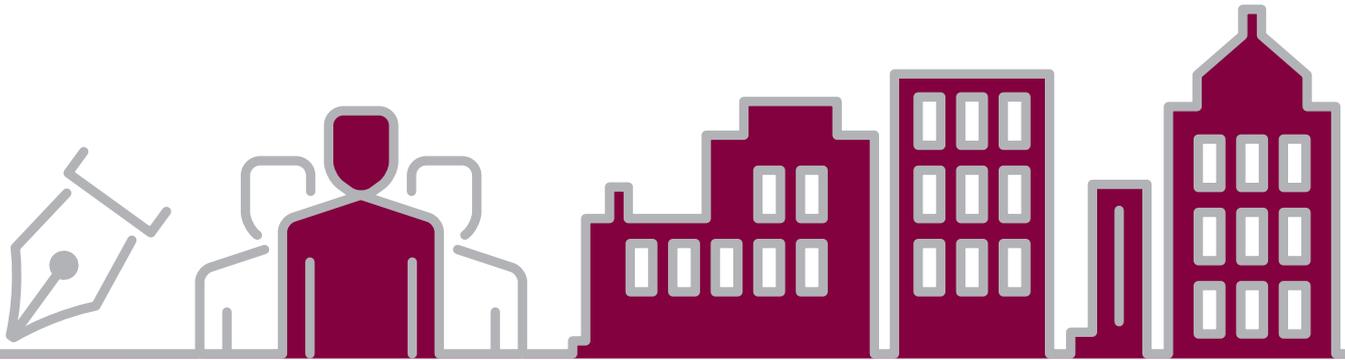
## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR YEARS OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IN HELPING BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYMENT ISSUES.

**At Palmers Solicitors, our specialist employment team aims to support businesses by helping them avoid misunderstandings and disputes. By doing so, we assist in lowering the risk of successful employment tribunal claims and ensure compliance with all of the latest legislation.**

We do not impose hefty audit fees or expensive retainers as a necessity but, instead, give businesses the freedom to choose exactly which services they require, allowing them to set their own budget for bespoke legal assistance to complement their in-house resources.

This brochure outlines in more detail the services we provide, which can be purchased for a range of reasonable fixed fees.

For more information and guidance, please contact us.



## DOCUMENT AUDIT

**Employment law is constantly changing and so your employment contracts, policies and procedures must change with the law if you hope to avoid disputes.**

At Palmers Solicitors, we also appreciate that your employment documentation should be suitable for your business needs, so we pride ourselves on finding solutions that are focussed on your commercial objectives as well as being compliant with the law. With this in mind, we can carry out an audit of your existing employment documentation and help you with any changes which are necessary to ensure compliance with the minimum legal requirements.

Where required, we will suggest amendments to bring your employment documents up-to-date and recommend new policies and other improvements which are designed to give your business more flexibility and wider protection.

## HELPLINE

**For a fixed monthly price, you can have access to telephone advice from our expert solicitors to help your business deal with any employment issues swiftly and effectively.**

Whether you have a quick query about employment rights and rules, or need more detailed guidance about best practice or a dispute, our specialists are here to help.

**“ WITH PALMERS, I HAVE A TEAM BEHIND ME THAT I HAVE TOTAL CONFIDENCE IN AND WHICH PROVIDES GOOD ADVICE. ”**

**Chris Bowhay**  
Cartamundi UK Limited

## DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

**The ACAS Code of Practice sets out the principles of what the employer and employee should do to achieve a reasonable standard of behaviour.**

The code encourages employers and managers to step in informally at an early stage to defuse tension between employees, or employees and more senior staff, which could lead to a grievance. In this way, the problem can be resolved before more formal disciplinary procedures have to be used or a grievance is lodged.

Should the issue reach an employment tribunal, the tribunal will consider the procedures that have been followed and whether a failure to follow the code was unreasonable.

Your business should have its own disciplinary and grievance procedures to help you resolve such issues in-house. At Palmers Solicitors, we can advise you on these procedures to ensure that they are up to date and legally compliant, or help you draft new procedures if you need them. We can also assist in dealing with issues as they arise.



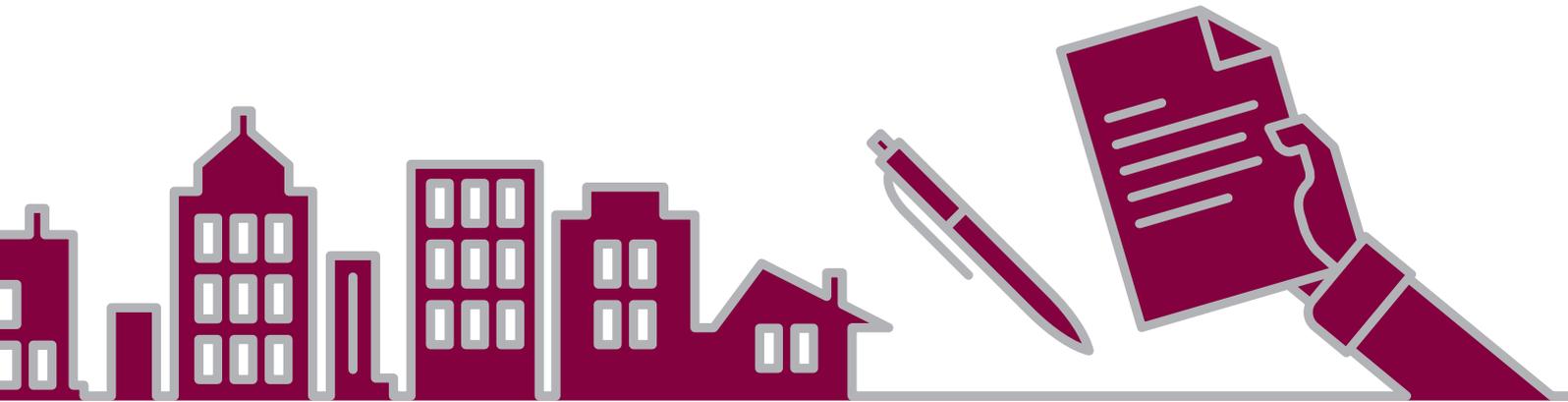
## BASIC AND ADVANCED EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

**It is a legal requirement that employers provide employees with a written statement of their main terms and conditions of employment. At Palmers Solicitors, we believe that watertight employment contracts are essential for your business.**

Minimum requirements include the name of the organisation and the employee, the date on which employment started, the pay and hours of work, holiday, and sick leave entitlement. Contact us for further information on other compulsory inclusions and for advice on optional aspects, such as the right to change an employee's duties, place of work or hours.

For employers who are preparing a contract for a senior employee, we may recommend extensive additional clauses, dealing with intellectual property, confidentiality and restraint of trade, for example.

Our expert solicitors can provide your business with a professionally drafted basic or advanced employment contract for a fixed fee. For more information and guidance, please contact us.



## COMPROMISE AGREEMENT

**A compromise agreement is a legally binding arrangement between an employer and an employee, which sets out the financial and other terms on which they will go their separate ways.**

In essence, such agreements include a severance payment made by the employer in return for the employee agreeing not to bring certain legal claims against the employer.

There are various circumstances in which a compromise agreement may be proposed, including redundancy, mutual agreement, dismissal or to settle an employment tribunal claim.

Once a compromise agreement has been signed by an employee, they accept the terms as a full and final settlement. As a result, they waive their rights to bring an employment-related claim against the (former) employer.

At Palmers Solicitors, we have the expertise required to prepare and advise on compromise agreements, including negotiating the final terms. For more information and guidance, please contact us.

**“ ROWLAND HALL IS HAPPY WITH THE WAY PALMERS HAS ADVISED US, SO WE ARE ALWAYS HAPPY TO RECOMMEND THE FIRM, AS IT IS IMPORTANT PEOPLE GET GOOD ADVICE. ”**

**Richard Snoxall**  
Rowland Hall

## BESPOKE STAFF HANDBOOK

**When a new employee joins your business, it is important that they understand the policies and procedures that help you to run that business.**

Many employers now provide new employees with a staff handbook when they start work, which brings together information on a wide range of relevant issues, from absence and alcohol abuse to data protection, discipline and grievance procedures, employee monitoring, holidays, staff development and stress management.

Putting in place a staff handbook that sets out all of the policies and procedures applicable to employees means everyone knows how situations should be handled and what is expected of them, which helps the business run smoothly.

At Palmers Solicitors, we have the expertise required to prepare and advise on staff handbooks tailored to your business needs. For more information and guidance, please contact us.

**“ THE TEAM AT PALMERS HAS A VERY PROFESSIONAL APPROACH AND THEY MAKE ME FEEL LIKE THEIR ONLY CLIENT. THEIR OTHER WORK DOESN'T GET IN THE WAY AND THAT IS A NICE FEELING. ”**

**Matt Bache**  
HBC Group

## HR WEBSITE

### Is it time to throw away your printed staff handbook?

#### **Palmers can provide you with your own HR website, which would include a compliant staff handbook and much more, online.**

We can build a bespoke site for you, with your own branding and colour scheme, so that your employees can view your policies and procedures and complete electronic forms online – wherever they are.

We can provide a separate HR area for use and access by specified individuals in your management team, including guidance on employment law for your organisation.

Our expert employment lawyers will manage your site to make sure your organisation's handbook and legal guidance is compliant. Whenever there is a change in legislation, we will update your site and inform you what changes have been made before emailing your employees to tell them about the update.

If we think there is a need for a new policy document (for example, on social networking), we will talk to you about this, draft a new policy and agree it with you; and then update the site. We send an email to all of your employees to tell them about the change and introduce the new policy document.

If we think a refresher is needed – for example, to remind employees about your bad weather policy as winter approaches – we will agree this with you and then send out an email reminder to all of your employees.

On the HR area, we also keep the employment facts up to date – so when there is a change in statutory rates to, say, the minimum wage or maternity pay, we will update the information and email your managers.

Clear policies will help prevent misunderstandings and clarify the rules, putting your organisation in a stronger position if there are any disputes. One of the biggest defences for an employee is 'I didn't know, I wasn't told'. A claim of ignorance in this way is unlikely to succeed when employees are regularly updated.

If you never want to worry about being up to date again, please contact us to find out more or to view the demonstration site.

## DOCUMENT PACKAGES

### Start-up package

Our start-up package includes a contract for a junior employee, a contract for a senior employee, and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

If you are running a fledgling business or have no employment documentation in place, our start-up package will give you the tools you need to manage the employment relationship between the business and its staff, all for a reasonable fixed fee.

### Template redundancy letters

This fixed fee package includes a letter informing employee/s that their position is at risk of redundancy and why, a letter inviting employee/s to an individual consultation meeting to discuss their situation, and a letter of dismissal for the people being made redundant.

### Template disciplinary letters

This fixed fee package includes a suspension letter to prevent the affected individual attending the workplace while investigations are completed, a letter inviting the individual to a disciplinary hearing to discuss the allegations against them and the supporting evidence, and a letter to inform the individual of the decision made following the disciplinary hearing.

For more information and guidance, please contact us.



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This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive statement of the law and gives general information only. You should not rely on it as legal advice. We do not accept liability to anyone who does rely on its contents. This guide was correct at time of publication and is not a substitute for legal advice.



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#### **RAYLEIGH**

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SS6 7QA

☎ 01268 988488

#### **SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS**

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South Woodham Ferrers,  
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#### **THURROCK**

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