



Scrutiny Office

Minister for Social Security
By email

10th June 2020

Dear Minister

Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Draft Employment (Amendment No.11) (Jersey) Law 2020 (Appointed Day) Act 202-

I write in relation to the above Act which will implement the family friendly law changes on 28th June, if approved by the States Assembly. The Panel acknowledges that the extensions to employment rights will improve the position for parents in the workplace, however, given the current situation with Covid-19 where employers have been severely affected, we would recommend delaying the implementation of the changes until September.

We acknowledge that a careful balance needs to be struck between fostering a family friendly culture in Jersey and supporting our business community. In that regard, the Panel believes that introducing these changes in the present climate will put additional and unnecessary pressure on businesses in the short-term, even with your plans for an interim subsidy scheme.

As we identified in our report on the new rights (S.R.9/2019), they will create an administrative burden for businesses and we question whether now is the right time to be introducing such measures. We have identified that businesses will have to ensure the following is put in place as a result of the new measures:

- **Staff handbooks and policies** – employers will need to ensure that these are updated to reflect the changes.
- **Training** – employers will need to ensure managers are trained to handle parental leave periods.
- **Facilities** – employers will need to ensure they are taking “reasonable steps” regarding the provision of breastfeeding facilities.
- **Costs** – businesses will need to factor in costs to their budgets which will increase for the paid parental leave element of the changes.
- **Recruitment** – employers will need to ensure cover is provided for parental leave periods.

We fully acknowledge that the family friendly changes will come into force, but we fail to see any reason why, amidst a pandemic, additional pressure should be put on the business community, which has suffered greatly as a result of the crisis, by introducing these changes now rather than delaying their implementation by two months.

In light of its views on the matter, the Panel recommends that, as a gesture of solidarity, you should delay the Appointed Day Act until September to give businesses the time they need to prepare for the changes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsten Morel', written in a cursive style.

Deputy Kirsten Morel
Chair
Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Cc. Deputy Mary Le Hegarat, Chair, Health and Social Security Panel