



Employers face a 'minefield' of legal risks when staff return to work

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Partner [Sophie Vanhegan](#) advised firms to be cautious to avoid reputational damage or having to defend costly tribunal claims.

“Employers are embarking on an unprecedented process and that means a minefield of potential legal risks for employers to navigate here, alongside how practically to get their employees comfortable with returning to the workplace,” she said.

“Disputes are bound to arise if employers try to apply a one-size-fits-all approach regardless of employees’ individual circumstances. Coronavirus is a hugely important health issue and consequently, highly emotive.”



“We may also see a spike in complaints of indirect sex discrimination as employers attempt to get staff back into the workplace if normal childcare providers and schools remain fully or partly closed, and any working arrangements requiring employees to be back in the office or working particular hours place women at a particular disadvantage which cannot be justified”.

“At this juncture, employers need to ensure they reopen their workplaces in accordance with government guidance and carefully consider the practical implications and logistical issues for their workplaces. This must be done alongside carefully ascertaining their employees’ individual circumstances before requiring staff to come back into the workplace,” Vanhegan said.

Read the full article [here](#).