



Office hugging ban fails to curb complaints

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The number of sex discrimination claims by workers has increased by 69 per cent - a five year high, research suggests.

More than 9,300 claims were made in the past year, with women increasingly likely to come forward since the start of the #MeToo movement, the employment lawyers [GQ Littler](#) said.

Attempts by companies to tackle sex discrimination, such as banning alcohol at work-related events or discouraging hugging, are not preventing claims being made, the law firm said.

[Hannah Mahon](#) of GQ Littler, said that the increase in claims would raise further questions about whether employers were doing enough to end inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

"It's clear that more needs to be done to eliminate discrimination," she added. "However, some rules, such as those that prohibit social interactions between members of the opposite sex, need to be carefully thought through and implemented with care.

"There is a balance to be struck between effective anti-discrimination measures and measures that can marginalise women, for example by excluding them from work-related social activities or making it more difficult for them to receive mentoring."