

## If changes happen without your agreement

If a contract change has not been agreed, your employer might decide to 'impose' a change and tell you it will take effect from a certain date.

Your employer should:

- explain the reasons why they feel they must make the change
- put the change in writing, for example in a letter or email

They might also ask you to sign a document to:

- confirm you understand that the change will be introduced
- let your employer know if you accept the change

You'll need to decide whether or not you want to accept the change and how to respond.

### Accepting the change

If you decide to accept the change, you should continue to work for your employer under the changed terms.

You may choose to tell your employer about your decision to help avoid any misunderstandings.

Even if you do not sign anything, your actions could legally count as 'affirming' (agreeing to) the change if both of the following apply:

- you continue to work under the changed terms and conditions
- you do not put in writing to your employer that you object to the change, for example in a letter or email

### Working under protest

'Working under protest' is when you continue to work for your employer but make it clear to them that you do not agree to the change and take steps to raise it.

You should normally only work under protest for a short time while you try to resolve your concerns with your employer or take legal action.

You should tell your employer that:

- you do not agree to the change
- you're working under protest
- you may need to consider taking legal action if your concerns are not resolved

You should put this in writing, for example in a letter or an email.

You should do this on a regular basis, while the disagreement with your employer is ongoing. For example, every time you get paid, if the change affects your pay.

## Taking legal action while working under protest

If you're considering taking legal action, you should get advice about your options. You can:

- [contact the Acas helpline](#)
- [get legal advice](#)
- talk to a trade union representative, if you have one

Your options will depend on the circumstances. For example, you might be able to make a legal claim for:

- breach of contract
- unlawful deduction from wages, if the change affects your pay
- [unlawful discrimination](#), if the change means you're treated unfairly in relation to a 'protected characteristic' under the law

If your employer imposes a change that makes your terms and conditions significantly worse than before, you might be able to claim [unfair dismissal](#) while continuing to work under the changed terms. This is a very complex claim to make. You should get advice if you're in this situation.

## If you're considering resigning

If you believe an imposed contract change seriously breaches your contract, you might be able to resign and make an employment tribunal claim of [constructive dismissal](#).

Before resigning, you should [get legal advice](#). A constructive dismissal claim can be very difficult to win at a tribunal.

## If there is a trade union

If your employer imposes a contract change after failing to reach agreement with a trade union, the union might consider:

- taking industrial action
- supporting you to take legal action

If you're a trade union member, you should talk to a trade union representative for advice on your options.