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## **Employment legislation changes under the Civil Partnership Act**

The Civil Partnership Act came into force on 5 December 2005. It enables same-sex couples to form a civil partnership by registering as civil partners. They will then be treated in the same way as spouses in relation to various benefits, including many in the field of employment law, either as a result of amendments made by the Act itself or by virtue of a Statutory Instrument (SI 2005/2114) made to implement necessary changes.

Some of the relevant changes are :

1. Protection from discrimination on the grounds of marriage under the SDA is extended to those who are in a civil partnership.
2. Entitlement to paternity leave, adoption leave, statutory paternity pay and statutory adoption pay is extended to those in civil partnerships.
3. Entitlement to request a contract variation for flexible working is extended to those in civil partnerships.
4. Civil partners are included in the definition of 'connected persons' for the purposes of regulations governing the conduct of employment agencies/businesses.
5. The status of a civil partner is now comparable to that of a spouse for the purposes of protection from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

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