

An Employer's Guide to People Compliance

The people-side duties every employer carries: right to work, working time, training records and personal data, in plain English.

What it is

People compliance is the set of duties that come with employing people rather than inspecting assets: checking the right to work, respecting working time limits, keeping training records, and handling personal data lawfully. They sit under several different laws rather than one.

Who the duty holder is

The employer carries these duties. On larger projects, principal contractors and clients share some of them.

What it requires of you

- Carry out and record a right-to-work check for every worker before they start, and re-check before any time-limited permission expires.
- Respect working time and rest-break limits, and keep adequate records.
- Keep training, induction and competence records for the people doing the work.
- Hold personal data lawfully under UK GDPR: only what you need, for only as long as you need it, kept secure.
- Keep policies current, and make sure people have actually read and understood them.

How often

Right-to-work re-checks	Before any time-limited permission expires
Working time and training records	Kept and reviewed on an ongoing basis

What happens if you don't

People-compliance failings carry their own penalties: civil penalties of up to £45,000 per illegal worker, rising to £60,000 for repeat breaches, employment tribunal awards, and fines from the ICO for mishandling personal data under UK GDPR.

Sources: [Right to work checks](#), [Working Time Regulations 1998](#), [UK GDPR: ICO guidance](#)

This guide is general guidance, not legal advice, and is a summary only. Duties and intervals can change and depend on your circumstances. Always check the current regulation and take competent-person advice. Last reviewed June 2026.