



Press release

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New UK Certification to Set the Standard for Family-Friendly Workplaces

- The **Family Inclusive Workplaces** certification is launching in the UK to set new benchmarks for family-friendly workplaces.
- Led by **Family Friendly Workplaces** in partnership with **Working Families**, the initiative builds on four years of success in Australia.
- **Minister Justin Madders** has welcomed the initiative, highlighting the role of employers in driving real change.
- Backed by **Deloitte UK, TLT LLP, dentsu, Grant Thornton UK, Kantar, Norton Rose Fulbright, and QBE Europe**
- Advocated by **Adoption UK, Employers' Initiative on Domestic Abuse (EIDA), Kinship, Maternal Mental Health Alliance, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) and The Fostering Network.**
- Provides employers with an **evidence-based framework** to assess and enhance family-friendly policies.
- Aligns with the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals** and helps tackle in-work child poverty.

A pioneering certification programme designed to set new benchmarks for family-friendly workplaces is launching in the UK.

The Family Inclusive Workplaces certification is an initiative formed by Family-Friendly Workplaces to accelerate business adoption of family-inclusive policies through the development of Global Work + Family Standards. Now, after four years of successfully driving policy change in Australia and helping over 650 organisations assess and enhance their family-friendly work practices, Family Friendly Workplaces is partnering with UK national charity Working Families to expand the reach of the initiative to benefit employers and families in the UK.

The certification provides employers with a rigorous, evidence-based framework to assess and enhance their policies, ensuring they support employee wellbeing, promote inclusivity, and contribute to business success.

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Working Families is a charity registered in England and Wales (No 1099808). and Scotland (SC045339).
Registered Company No 4727690.

Family Friendly Workplaces has already received backing from some big names in the UK, with the founding partners Deloitte UK and TLT LLP, supporting partners dentsu, Grant Thornton UK, Kantar, Norton Rose Fulbright and QBE Europe, and advocacy partners the Adoption UK, Employers' Initiative on Domestic Abuse (EIDA), Kinship, Maternal Mental Health Alliance, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) and The Fostering Network, all coming together to support the initiative.

The certification framework aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, positioning family-friendly policies as a driver of economic and societal progress. It also responds to urgent challenges, such as the rise in in-work child poverty, by supporting businesses in adopting policies that enable employees to thrive both at work and at home. Creating supportive workplaces allows employees to balance work and home responsibilities effectively, reducing absenteeism, improving job security, and supporting long-term economic stability.

Fair employment rights and progressive workplace practices have been identified as key pillars of the government's plan for growth. Important developments are being made to the Employment Rights Bill, as seen from the tabled amendments, which seek to strengthen protections for workers, improve access to flexible working, and enhance security for those in insecure employment. These changes underscore the critical role that workplace policies play in shaping a fairer and more inclusive labour market.

Minister Justin Madders, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Business and Trade, said: "We're taking action to support workers and business by helping more people stay in work, improve their financial security, and contribute to the economy through our plan to Make Work Pay. But legislation can only go so far. Real change happens when employers take the lead, shaping workplace cultures that enable people to thrive. That's why initiatives like the Family Friendly Workplace Accreditation are so important. By embedding family-friendly policies, employers are not only creating better working environments but also strengthen their ability to attract and retain top talent, boost productivity, and support economic growth."

Employers will gain access to sector-specific guidance, research-driven solutions, and expert insights from Working Families, which has over three decades of experience in advocating for family-friendly workplace policies.

Families, who have had a challenging time in recent years with the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis, will be heartened that the certification is designed to empower them to navigate the demands of family and work life in the UK and will give more employees access to the flexibility they need to manage their caring responsibilities. It also aims to address disparities in access to flexible working, ensuring solutions are available across all roles and sectors.

Businesses stand to benefit significantly. Research from the University of Birmingham (2023) found that 71.2% of managers see flexible working as a performance-enhancing tool, while 76.5% report increased productivity. A CIPD

study further highlights that 54% of managers struggling with recruitment have improved hiring success by offering greater flexibility. In addition, the scheme helps businesses future-proof by embracing the full breadth of caring experiences such as sandwich-caring and elder-care, that are likely to be ever-more relevant with an ageing population.

Working Families are encouraging organisations to step forward and carry out a self-assessment to evaluate how they perform against the Global Work + Family Standards and to check if they are eligible to be certified as a Family-Inclusive Workplace™.

Jane van Zyl, CEO at Working Families said:

“For too long, businesses have lacked a clear, evidence-based framework for what truly makes a workplace family-friendly. This certification changes that. By giving employers the tools to assess, improve and embed family-friendly policies, we’re helping to create workplaces where parents and carers can thrive at work whilst fulfilling their caring responsibilities. In turn, businesses will see higher retention, engagement and productivity, and create a culture where employees feel valued and supported.”

Emma Walsh, CEO at Parents at Work, said:

“Family-friendly workplaces aren’t just good for employees—they’re good for business and the wider economy. With this certification, we are setting a new standard for what it means to be an employer of choice. By prioritising family-friendly policies, businesses can improve retention, boost productivity, and contribute to a stronger, more equitable society.”

Talking about why being a progressive family-friendly employer is important to them, **Jackie Henry, Managing Partner for People and Purpose at Founding Partner Deloitte UK**, said:

“There is a growing recognition of the importance of family-friendly policies and their role in driving positive societal change by supporting working parents. We’re pleased to support the Working Families’ certification programme, which shines a spotlight on those employers who are committed to creating workplaces that attract and retain top talent.

“At Deloitte, we now offer 26 weeks’ fully paid family leave for all parents and it’s brilliant to see the first colleagues benefiting from it. We’ve also been sharing what we’ve learnt with other organisations, and so we’re proud to champion this certification as a benchmark for others.”

Helen Hodgkinson, Chief People Officer at TLT said:

“TLT’s people are our firm’s beating heart. Meeting their needs and requirements throughout their working life directly contributes to our ongoing commercial success. In an era where people expect more from their employer, any business that fails to listen to their people is frankly taking a substantial risk and will lose out on talent.

“We are proud to be a founding partner of the UK’s first family-friendly accreditation. I am confident that the framework will set a new benchmark for employers to ensure they are taking the right steps to support employee wellbeing and improve inclusivity.”

For more information visit <https://familyfriendlyworkplaces.co.uk/>

Notes to editors

For more information contact

Working Families press office by email press@workingfamilies.org.uk

About Family Friendly Workplaces™

Family Friendly Workplaces™ is a global movement dedicated to embedding family-friendly policies in organisations to create healthier, more inclusive, and productive work environments. Launched in Australia in 2021 by Parents at Work and UNICEF Australia, it recognises employers who are leading the way in their support of families by using a framework of Global Work + Family Standards. The standards align to the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals, employers who are certified join a global movement to drive social change and promote a better future of work for everyone.

www.familyfriendlyworkplaces.com

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About Working Families

Working Families is a charity on a mission to remove the barriers that people with caring responsibilities face in the workplace. We provide free legal advice to parents and carers on their rights at work. We give employers the tools they need to support their employees while creating a flexible, high-performing workforce. And we advocate on behalf of the UK’s working parents and carers, influencing policy through campaigns informed by ground-breaking research.

workingfamilies.org.uk