

New Staff Onboarding

About forty five minutes to set up properly, per hire, and hospitality hires often. The file this builds is the one a tribunal, an inspector or the minimum wage team asks for, years after the shift.

Name Role First shift

Hospitality turnover makes onboarding a rhythm, not an event. The sequence below is front-loaded on purpose: everything in section one happens before the first shift, because after it some of these cannot be repaired.

1. Before the first shift about 15 minutes

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Right to work check, on originals or the online service

Before any work, including trials. Copies dated and kept for the employment plus two years.

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Written statement of particulars, day one at the latest

The main terms are a day-one right. A signed contract before the first shift is cleaner still.

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Age checked against the role

Under-18s cannot sell alcohol unapproved, work certain hours, or use some kitchen equipment. The rota planner carries the 18 to 20 and under-18 wage floors.

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Uniform and knife policies in writing

Deductions for uniforms or breakages can drop pay below the minimum wage floor, which is where wage claims start.

2. Pay set up right about 10 minutes

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The correct wage floor for their age band

£12.71 at 21 and over, £10.85 at 18 to 20, £8.00 under 18 and apprentices, from 1 April 2026. Budget the loaded rate, about 29 per cent above the headline.

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Keep the records six years

Hours, pay and the calculations. Minimum wage records are inspected in hospitality more than anywhere.

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Pension assessment on day one

Auto-enrolment duties bite from the first day, postponement or not.

3. Tips, told straight about 10 minutes

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Give them the written tips policy

Required wherever tips are more than occasional. How tips are allocated, when they are paid, who the troncmaster is.

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Explain the tronc in one minute

All tips reach the team by the end of the month after the month received; the tronc PAYE taxes them; a proper tronc means no National Insurance comes off them.

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Point them at their records right

Workers can request the tips records. Knowing that on day one is what trust looks like.

4. The first week about 10 minutes

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Food hygiene and allergen training, recorded

The 14 allergens, and the PPDS labelling rules for anything packed on site. Training records are what the EHO reads.

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Challenge 25 briefing for anyone near the bar

The refusal log and the briefing records are the licence's armour.

**Fire walk and the day-one safety brief**

Exits, the assembly point, the interlock. Signed and filed.

**Book the four-week check-in**

Turnover is decided in the first month. A diarised conversation is the cheapest retention tool in the building.

Zazen Tax

Accountants for hospitality. zazentax.com/contact

*General information, not advice for your circumstances. Rates and thresholds are 2026/27 for the UK and change from time to time.
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