

# UNITE HEALTH & SAFETY BRIEFING

## **The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) bill**

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**Significant health and safety rights and laws at risk including those that cover – risk assessment, work equipment, manual handling, PPE, display screens and chemicals and biological hazards.**

The bill poses a significant threat to workers' rights and proposes to automatically sweep away thousands of pieces of legislation and upend decades-worth of case law. The government is yet to clarify which laws it intends to retain, amend or allow to expire. The ultimate goal however is deregulation and will span not just Health and Safety and employment rights but also environmental and consumer issues and many more areas.

A range of employment and health and safety rights derived from, or reinforced by, EU law will be affected. These rights were maintained as retained EU law when the UK left the European Union. Parliament can already amend or scrap these measures.

This bill takes an alternative approach by revoking automatically from the end of 2023:

- All EU-derived subordinate legislation
- Retained direct EU legislation.

The supremacy of EU law is also ended.

Some EU-derived legislation that was incorporated into UK law via Acts of Parliament will not automatically expire. However, crucially, it could be affected by huge changes in the way that law is interpreted which could lead to significant changes in the way that legislation protects workers.