

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE / NAMES OMITTED AT SOURCE

Unpaid wages

Basic report | Employment | England and Wales

Claimant:

Respondent:

Summary

On the fictional facts provided, there is a credible basis to ask the employer to pay £1,200 gross in outstanding contractual wages. A signed contract and an approved timesheet support the amount. The employer has not yet explained why the payment was withheld. This is an initial assessment of the information described, not a finding that money is legally owed.

Facts and material considered

The claimant is a worker in England, normally paid monthly. Payment for 60 approved hours at £20 per hour was due on 31/08/2026 but was not received. The example assumes a written contract, approved timesheet and bank statement. Those documents are fictional and no actual personal information has been used.

Merits, relevant law and key risks

Section 13 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 generally protects workers against unauthorised deductions from wages. A shortfall in the wages properly payable may fall within that protection. The strongest evidence here is the agreed rate and approval of the hours. Check whether the payment was made late, whether the hours are disputed and whether a lawful deduction or written authorisation applies. Worker status and the precise contractual terms still matter.

Possible outcome

The illustrative disputed principal is $60 \times £20 = £1,200$ gross, subject to normal tax and National Insurance treatment. Recovery could be £0 if no liability is established or payment has already been made, or up to the proven unpaid amount. This is not a valuation of damages for distress, dismissal or discrimination, and no additional award is assumed.

Deadline and recommended next steps

For this single missed payment, a three-month-minus-one-day calculation from 31/08/2026 gives 29/11/2026, before any adjustment for Acas early conciliation. This date is an illustration to verify urgently, not a final filing deadline. First, request a written payroll explanation and payment. Second, preserve the contract, timesheet and bank statement. Third, contact Acas promptly about early conciliation if unresolved; an internal grievance does not itself stop the time limit. Citizens Advice offers a free starting point.

Sources and limits

Employment Rights Act 1996, sections 13 and 23; Acas, "If wages are not paid". A qualified adviser should check the facts, correct respondent and deadline before a claim is filed. This Basic report does not include case-law analysis.

This assessment is generated by an AI system and does not constitute legal advice. It is designed to help you understand your position before seeking professional advice. No solicitor-client or adviser-client relationship is created by this report.