



The HR WIRE

ETC HR Employer Compliance News II *Making Compliance Connections*

January 2026

SECTION I: Notices, Reminders & Alerts & SECTION II: Noteworthy Compliance Happenings

Workplace Labor Notice Updates

See Previously Reported Resource for a running list of Federal Forms, Notices and State

New Federal Labor Notices

- No updates

New State Labor Notices

- **AR** – new [Veteran's Benefits & Services](#) notice released. Employers with 50 or more full-time equivalent employees are required to display it in a conspicuous area in the workplace that's accessible to all employees.
- **CA** – updated [Paid Sick Leave Notice](#) and [2026 Know Your Rights Notice](#)
- **DC** – updated [Min Wage Labor Notice](#) effective 7.2026
- **WA** – updated [2026 Paid Family & Medical Leave Notice](#) (updates weekly benefit amounts to a range of \$100 to \$1,647 based on prior earnings, clarifies eligibility requirements, and expands information on job protection and continuation of health care benefits, while adding required equal opportunity and accessibility disclosures.) Learn more: <https://paidleave.wa.gov/updates/>

State Handbook Addendum Updates – **January** Releases

- **CO State Handbook Addendum**
 - Updates Overtime Policy reflective of 2026 changes/updates
- **MD – State Handbook Addendum**
 - Optional, more simplified Baltimore City Lactation Accommodation policy released
- **MN State Handbook Addendum**
 - Updated Nursing Mothers, Lactating Employees & Pregnancy Accommodations Policy adding language clarification
- **PA State Handbook Addendum**
 - Updated Pittsburg Paid Sick Leave Policy
 - Removal of Allegany County Paid Sick Leave Policy

State Handbook Addendums can be access on the [ETC HR Platform Resource Website](#) If you encounter issues, please reach out to the HR Support team at HR_Help@etctracking.com



Reminders & Alerts

New! Benefit Plans Starting January 1 - Employer's CMS Part D Creditable Coverage Online Disclosure – February 28, 2026

New! ACA 1095 Tax Form Distribution Due March 2, 2026

Distribution of the **1095-B (self-insured and level funded only)** plans of less than 50 FTEs) and **1095-C** (>50 FTE Applicable Large Employers (ALEs)) to employees by this deadline is required. Regulations require these forms are due no later than 30 days after Jan 31 of the following year (or next business day if the 30th falls on a weekend or holiday). Access the Distribution Rules: https://www.irs.gov/instructions/i109495c#en_US_2021_publink100033116

New! IRS Releases FAQs Addressing New Deduction for Qualified Overtime (OBBB)

On January 23, 2026, the Department of Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued [Fact Sheet 2026-01](#), providing answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the new "Deduction for Qualified Overtime Compensation" created by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (the OBBBA).

On July 4, 2025, the OBBBA was signed into law and created the **Deduction for Qualified Overtime Compensation** to allow individuals to claim a federal income tax deduction for certain qualified overtime compensation for the 2025 to 2028 tax years. Individuals can claim a deduction of up to \$12,500 (\$25,000 for joint filers) and the deduction phases out for individuals with incomes above \$150,000 (\$300,000 for joint filers). Employers are required to report to employees the amount of qualified overtime compensation that is paid each year to allow the employees to claim the deduction.

Fact Sheet 2026-01 addresses questions related to (1) what constitutes qualified overtime compensation, (2) who is eligible for the deduction, and (3) other rules relevant for eligibility for the deduction.

Specifically, the FAQs reiterate that qualified overtime compensation includes only overtime that is required to be paid by Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). For overtime to be required under the FLSA, it must, among other requirements, be paid to an individual who is both covered by the FLSA and not exempt from the FLSA's overtime requirement. If an employer pays overtime that is required by another law or agreement (including a collective bargaining agreement) but that would not be required by the FLSA, the amount is not included in qualified overtime compensation.

The FAQs also make clear that, when an employee is paid "one and one-half times" overtime compensation paid to an employee as required by the FLSA, only the "half" portion of the pay is considered qualified overtime compensation.

Finally, the FAQs also provides resources and guidance that are intended to help assist **individuals** in determining whether they are FLSA overtime-eligible employees and received qualified overtime compensation.

New! Non-competes & 2026 State Compensation Thresholds

While the Federal Trade Commission no longer seeks to ban non-competes nationwide, individual states continue adding limits on restrictive covenants including non-competition provisions and non-solicitation provisions. One common limit is a minimum compensation level, which adjusts regularly to keep up with inflation.

- 4 states have banned all non-competes for employees: California, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Oklahoma. (Wyoming adopted significant limits in 2025, but not a flat ban.)
- Some states exempt certain industries, most commonly healthcare.



- More common limits is the setting of a minimum compensation level for employees, as is the current case for 11 states and the District of Columbia, see below

State	Minimum Annualized Compensation Level for 2026
Colorado	\$130,014; \$78,008.40 for non-solicitation provisions
District of Columbia	\$162,164, or \$270,274 for medical specialists
Florida	<i>Florida does not set minimum compensation for enforcement; rather, it allows easier enforcement against employees paid at least “twice the annual mean wage of the county”; this threshold ranges from \$80,000 to \$140,000.</i>
Illinois	\$75,000 for “actual or expected annualized rate of earnings,” increasing to \$80,000 for 2027-2031; \$45,000 for non-solicitation provisions, increasing to \$50,000 for 2027-2031
Maine	\$63,840
Maryland	\$46,800, or \$350,000 for certain healthcare providers
Massachusetts	\$35,568 on a salary basis with FLSA-exempt duties*
New Hampshire	\$30,160
Nevada	<i>Nevada does not set minimum compensation but does require the employee to be salaried, not hourly.</i>
Oregon	\$119,541 on a salary basis with exempt duties**
Rhode Island	\$39,900 in regular pay (excluding overtime, Sunday, and holiday pay) on a salary basis with FLSA-exempt duties*
Virginia	\$78,364.52 on a salary basis with FLSA-exempt duties, or mostly paid by commission/incentive/bonus
Washington state	\$126,858.83 for employees, \$317,147.09 for independent contractors

*These states require the employees to be exempt under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

****Oregon requires the employees to be exempt not just under the federal FLSA but under stricter state law as well. See Ore. Rev. Stat. 653.295(b).

NOTE: These thresholds may vary in certain circumstances, such as when an employee’s base salary is under the threshold but he or she usually makes more in commissions, incentives, or bonuses.

New! 2026 Federal Poverty Levels Impact Employer Liability Under ACA Pay-or-Play Rules



Employer Takeaway: To avoid pay-or-play penalties, ALEs should confirm their health coverage will be affordable before the start of each plan year. ALEs that use the FPL safe harbor to determine affordability should apply FPL guidelines in effect within six months before the first day of the plan year. ALEs with calendar-year health plans should use the [2025 FPL guidelines](#) for the 2026 plan year, while ALEs with non-calendar-year health plans may use the new 2026 FPL guidelines.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) updates federal poverty levels (FPLs) each year to determine eligibility for certain programs and benefits. HHS' new [guidelines](#) set the 2026 FPL for an individual at \$15,960 (up from \$15,650 in 2025) in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. For Alaska and Hawaii, FPLs for an individual are \$19,950 and \$18,360, respectively (up from \$19,550 and \$17,990 in 2025). FPLs may impact an applicable large employer's (ALE) potential liability under the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) "pay-or-play" rules in two ways:

1. ALEs may use the FPL safe harbor to determine the affordability of their health plan coverage; and
2. FPLs are used to determine eligibility for premium tax credits (PTC) for health insurance purchased through an ACA Marketplace.

An ALE is only liable for a pay-or-play penalty if one or more of its full-time employees receive a PTC for health insurance purchased through a Marketplace. Individuals cannot receive these if they are eligible for affordable, minimum-value health coverage through their employer, regardless of whether their income meets FPL guidelines.

New! DOL Recovers More Than \$295 Million in Back Wages in FY 2025

Employer Takeaway: The monetary recovery for FY 2025 even after the DOL undergoing significant changes, including reductions in the department's workforce and funding and a shift from traditional enforcement actions toward employer compliance assistance and self-reporting, demonstrates the Department's commitment to the lawful payment of wages to employees. In light of the increased DOL recoveries in FY 2025, employers should ensure wage and hour compliance to limit their exposures and reduce the risk of investigations.

2025 Recoveries:

The DOL recovered more than \$295 million in back wages in FY 2025, up from \$202 million in FY 2024, according to [agency data](#). The increase in recovered back wages comes despite the department conducting fewer compliance actions in FY 2025 than it did in FY 2024—17,000 compliance actions were concluded in FY 2025 compared to 17,300 in 2024. Additionally, the DOL assessed \$58.7 million in penalties in FY 2025, compared to \$35.9 million in FY 2024. According to agency data, a large portion of the cases resolved in FY 2025 originated from previous years, with many of the high-value cases involving violations that occurred between 2016 and 2024.

Changes in Employer Resources

Recently, the DOL enhanced its compliance assistance efforts by providing new guidance and tools aimed at helping employers stay informed about their compliance obligations. For example, the department created an improved [compliance assistance hub](#), updated [compliance videos](#) on the FLSA and created a [YouTube series](#) on the FMLA. The DOL also relaunched the [opinion letter program](#) and [Payroll Audit Independent Determination program](#), which offers employers an opportunity to self-report and resolve potential minimum wage and overtime violations under the FLSA, as well as certain potential FMLA violations.

Background:

The DOL's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) enforces federal minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping and child labor requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The WHD also enforces the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and a number of other employment standards and worker protections. Under the FLSA, nonexempt employees must be paid minimum wage and 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Employees may pursue unpaid wages by filing a lawsuit or bringing an administrative wage claim before the DOL. Under the FLSA, employees who were not paid minimum wage or overtime compensation, or both, may be awarded their unpaid wages plus an additional equal amount as liquidated damages.



New! DOL Clarifies Applicable Minimum Wage & Tip Compensation for Exempt Commissioned Employees

Employer Takeaway: The DOL **confirms** that Section 7(i)(1) expressly incorporates the **federal minimum wage and not any higher applicable minimum wage**. So, if a retail and service establishment employee receives a regular rate of pay greater than 1.5 times the federal minimum wage, the employer satisfies the minimum pay standard in Section 7(i)(1) for a particular workweek. Additionally, the DOL advises that tips are compensation for purposes of Section 7(i)(2) only to the extent that an employer relies on them to meet federal, state or other wage obligations. These tips can be included when determining if more than half of an employee's earnings come from commissions. Employers should regularly review Section 7(i) exemptions to ensure they meet their FLSA pay requirements.

Background:

On Jan. 5, 2026, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued Opinion Letter [FLSA 2026-4](#), addressing the following:

- Whether, in a jurisdiction where the state minimum wage exceeds the federal minimum wage, an employer must use the federal minimum to determine if it has satisfied the minimum pay standard in Section 7(i)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); and
- Whether tips must be considered compensation when determining if more than half of an employee's earnings come from commissions, as required by Section 7(i)(2).

The opinion letter concerns an employer operating restaurants in a state with its own tip credit law and minimum wage that exceeds the federal minimum wage.

New! DOL Issues Opinion Letter & Clarifies Learned Professional Exemption

Employer Takeaway: The FLSA prohibits employers from misclassifying nonexempt employees as exempt. Employers have the discretion to classify employees as nonexempt so long as they pay at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked and the overtime premium for work in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. In the scenario addressed by DOL in its most recently issued Opinion Letter, the DOL advised that even if the employee met the tests for the learned professional exemption, the employer may still choose to classify the employee as nonexempt. The DOL further advised that the discontinuation of supervisory responsibilities does not preclude employees from being classified as learned professionals as long as they meet all of the exemption's requirements, including being compensated at a rate no less than the FLSA's standard salary level.

Background:

On Jan. 5, 2026, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued Opinion Letter [FLSA2026-1](#), responding to an employee's question about being reclassified from an exempt employee to a nonexempt employee while believing that they continue to satisfy the education and job duties criteria of an exempt learned professional under Section 13(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The question concerns an individual employed as a licensed clinical social worker for a health care organization.

The FLSA generally requires employers to pay employees at least the federal minimum wage for every hour worked and 1.5 times their regular pay rate for each hour worked over 40 in a workweek. Section 13(a)(1) of the FLSA provides an exemption from both minimum wage and overtime pay for employees employed as bona fide executive, administrative, professional and outside sales employees.

New! EEOC Rescinds *Enforcement Guidance* on Harassment in the Workplace

On **Jan. 22, 2026**, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) voted to rescind its *Enforcement Guidance* on Harassment in the Workplace (Enforcement Guidance).

Employer Takeaway:



- The EEOC's rescission of the *Enforcement Guidance* **does not alter federal law**, it does eliminate informal guidance regarding the EEOC's enforcement of federal harassment laws, which could lead to **uncertainty for employers in complying with such laws**.
- *Bostock* **still prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity**.
- Employers may also be subject to state or local laws that prohibit sexual orientation and gender identity harassment and discrimination.
- Employers should continue to ensure compliance with all relevant discrimination and harassment laws.
- The EEOC did not specify whether it will issue new guidance, but employers should monitor for updates.

Recap:

- On **April 29, 2024**, the EEOC updated the Enforcement Guidance. Among the updates, the EEOC added protections for gender identity and sexual orientation harassment to incorporate case law, including the Supreme Court's 2020 decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, which holds that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation constitutes sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (Title VII). The updated Enforcement Guidance also provided guidance regarding emerging issues, such as harassment in a remote work environment.
- On **May 15, 2025**, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas ruled that the EEOC exceeded its authority in expanding the definition of "sex" to include "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" and that neither Title VII nor the ruling in *Bostock* defines "sex" accordingly. In its ruling, the Texas District Court vacated related elements of the Enforcement Guidance.
- On **Jan. 22, 2026**, the EEOC **voted to rescind the *Enforcement Guidance* which** included real-world examples and employer best practices to prevent harassment claims, rather than the protection provisions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

New! EBSA's 2026 National Employee Benefit Plan Enforcement Projects

On Jan. 15, 2026, the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) announced updates to its national enforcement projects for fiscal year 2026. According to EBSA, these projects highlight areas in which the agency will prioritize enforcement efforts to enhance overall employee benefit plan compliance, address abusive practices, and strengthen protections for plan participants and beneficiaries.

Updated Enforcement Projects

EBSA's national projects identify the priority areas guiding its enforcement efforts. Under the updated initiatives, investigators will prioritize cases related to:

- › **Cybersecurity**—*This project addresses the growing risks cyberattacks pose to employee benefit plans and participants.*
- › **Mental health and substance use disorder (MH/SUD) benefits**—EBSA will target violations by plans and service providers that block participants and beneficiaries from accessing promised MH/SUD benefits, including burdensome claims processes, unjustified treatment exclusions, inaccurate provider lists and unreasonable limits on care.
- › **Surprise billing**—This project reviews compliance with the No Surprises Act (NSA), ensuring plans follow the prudent layperson standard for emergency services, apply in-network cost-sharing to NSA-protected services and provide required notices and disclosures. Compliance with other NSA protections, such as prohibitions on prior authorization and more restrictive administrative requirements, will also be reviewed.
- › **Protecting benefit distributions**—This project aims to ensure that participants receive retirement benefits owed to them when plan sponsors fail to act, struggle financially or abandon their plans.
- › **Retirement asset management**—This project focuses on protecting retirement income by ensuring fiduciaries prudently select and monitor plan investments.
- › **Criminal abuse of contributory benefit plans**—This project centers on protecting workers who contribute to employer-sponsored retirement and health benefit plans from criminal abuse.



In addition, although not a national project, EBSA will continue to identify abusive [Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements \(MEWAs\)](#) and [prevent fraudulent MEWA operators](#) from opening new arrangements in other states.

Background

EBSA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Labor that administers and enforces Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), which establishes fiduciary and other standards for employee benefit plans sponsored by private-sector employers. EBSA is responsible for protecting more than 156 million workers, retirees and their families who are covered by approximately 2.6 million health plans, 801,000 private retirement plans and 514,000 additional welfare benefit plans.

New! 'Stay or Pay' Contractual Repayment Provisions Under State Scrutiny

Employer Takeaway: Employers may see an uptick in some states' regulations limiting an employers' ability to claw back funds based on employees' continued employment with an organization. Employers offering employment agreements with claw-back arrangements for employees in California and New York are encouraged to note the recent enactments. Moreover, it is important for employers offering employment agreements with repayment obligation provisions (oftentimes associated with associated with tuition reimbursement, relocation, sign on bonus programs) remain aware of and compliance with applicable state regulations.

Employers frequently enter into agreements with employees that provide them with money up front in the form of a signing bonus, tuition reimbursement, relocation expenses or other monetary benefits. Some of these agreements require the employee to repay the money in total or in part if the employee does not remain employed for a certain amount of time. For example, 50 percent of the money might have to be returned if the employee leaves in less than a year, 25 percent might have to be returned if the employee leaves in less than two years, and all repayment is forgiven if the employee stays for longer than two years. These "stay or pay" agreements benefit employers because they encourage employee retention and allow employers to recover their investment if the employee chooses to leave early. However, states with a pro-employee focus are starting to restrict such agreements.

In December 2025, New York enacted the Trapped at Work Act to restrict stay or pay provisions. The act prohibits provisions that require workers to repay money if they leave the job before a specific date. It further restricts employers' ability to recover training expenses or to claim that workers owe their employer reimbursement of such expenses. As of Jan. 1, 2026, California has a similar law. Pursuant to the law, employers may no longer require workers to pay back money because their employment ended before a certain date.

Both laws have some exceptions, such as repayment agreements related to loans and some agreements for tuition reimbursement. However, the exceptions are narrow, and employers in New York and California should expect scrutiny on any agreement term that requires repayment of money conditioned on the length of time a worker decides to remain employed. -Jan 21, 2026, article published by Barnes & Thornburg, LLP

New! OSHA Clarifies Key Compliance Expectations Through 7 Letters of Interpretation

Recently, OSHA [issued](#) seven letters of interpretation clarifying its interpretation and enforcement of specific regulatory requirements.

These letters address the following topics:

1. Permit-required confined spaces;
2. COVID-19 recordkeeping and reporting status;
3. Powered industrial truck (PIT) training;
4. Recordkeeping software;
5. Engineering control standards for benzene and 1,3-butadiene;
6. Audiometric testing for workers with cochlear implants (CIs); and
7. Stair angle and tread depth compliance.



These letters **do not create new obligations for employers**. They provide **practical guidance** for employers, helping them understand regulatory expectations, reduce compliance risks and avoid potential citations. Employers are encouraged to access and review the Letters to determine applicability and validate their current practices for confined space entry, recordkeeping, equipment training, exposure controls and physical workplace design. By aligning policies and procedures with OSHA's clarified expectations, employers can reduce compliance uncertainty, strengthen safety programs, and better position themselves during inspections or audits.

New! OSHA Extends Its Hazard Communication Standard Compliance Dates

On Jan. 15, 2026, OSHA issued a [final rule](#) formally extending the compliance deadlines associated with its updated **Hazard Communication Standard (HCS)**. The underlying revision to the standard, intended to align the HCS with the seventh edition of the Globally Harmonized System, was finalized on May 20, 2024, and took effect on July 19, 2024. Applicable Employers should be prepared for a staggered rollout of updated SDS and chemical labels as manufacturers and distributors meet the extended compliance deadlines. As new hazard information arrives in the workplace, employers will be responsible for updating their written HCS programs, revising on-site labeling systems and providing additional training to employees. Although the deadlines for employer compliance actions have been extended, the changes that were required in the HCS 2024 final rule have not changed. ETC does not typically monitor or report on OSHA-related matters. Employers are encouraged to stay ahead of any applicable compliance obligations.

Reminder! Update Benefit Limits & Obligations 2026

Employers should ensure their HRIS/Payroll system correctly reflects annual benefits-related changes and prepare for upcoming obligations:

- Flexible Spending Account & Dependent Care Limits & Extensions
- Health Savings Accounts Contribution Limits and High-Deductible Health Plan Qualifications
- Social Security Taxable Limit Increases
- Any Retirement Plan Limits
- Post/Distribute updated Federal and State Labor Notices
- W-2 Annual Form Provision & Reporting
- 1095 Annual Form Provision and Reporting

Reminder: Federal: OSHA Form 300A Posting Begins February 1 & Electronic Reporting Due March 2

Form 300A Workplace Posting Begins February 1

Covered employers that had 11 or more employees in the entire company at any point in 2025 are required to post the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Form 300A, Summary of Work-Related Injury and Illnesses, from February 1 through April 30. This requirement applies even if the company didn't have any recordable incidents in 2025.

OSHA Form 300A must be certified by a company executive and posted in each establishment in a conspicuous location where notices to employees are customarily posted.

Certain establishments are partially exempt from OSHA's routine recordkeeping requirements, if they have 10 or fewer employees or if their primary business activity is classified as low hazard according to OSHA's guidelines. A full list of exempt low-hazard industries, ordered by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, can be found [here](#). (The exemption is "partial" because all employers must notify OSHA when an employee is killed on the job or suffers a work-related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye.)

Form 300A Electronic Submission Due by March 2

Covered establishments that had 250 or more employees in the prior calendar year, or 20–249 employees if they're in certain high-risk industries, must submit their 2025 Form 300A data electronically using OSHA's



online [Injury Tracking Application](#) (ITA). The deadline to submit the report is March 2, 2026. These requirements are based on the size of each “establishment” (how many employees there are at a given physical location), not how many employees are in the entire company. Most employers that are covered by a State Plan [must also use the ITA](#) to send data electronically.

Employers that meet any of the following criteria DO NOT have to send Form 300A information to OSHA:

- They are partially exempt from OSHA’s routine recordkeeping requirements, as mentioned above.
- They never had 20 or more employees during the previous calendar year, regardless of industry.
- They had between 20 and 249 employees at some point during the previous calendar year but are NOT on this [list](#) of high-hazard industries.

Additional information, FAQs, and the ITA can be found on OSHA’s [ITA page](#).

Form 300 and Form 301 Electronic Submission Required by March 2

Covered establishments in designated [high-hazard industries](#) that had 100 or more employees in the prior calendar year will need to electronically submit information from their Form 300, Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, and Form 301, Injury and Illness Incident Report, through OSHA’s ITA. This is in addition to submitting information from their Form 300A.

Help Determining Coverage

Employers can use the [ITA Coverage Application](#) to determine if they’re required to electronically submit their injury and illness information and whether they should review an applicable [State Plan](#) to determine reporting requirements. **See also ETC’s compliance reminder sent Jan 13, 2026.**

Recap Previously Published:

- Benefit Plans Starting **December 1** - Employer’s CMS Part D Creditable Coverage [Online Disclosure](#) – **January 31, 2025**
- Looking ahead to January 2026 – Updated Benefit Limits & Obligations
- USCIS Updates Certain Validity Periods for EAD (Employment Authorization Documents)
- US Postal Services Changes Regarding Postmark Date System – **Eff Dec 24, 2025**
- 2026 Federal EEO Trends
- Executive Order Restricting State Regulations of Artificial Intelligence
- Employment Policies to Review Ahead of 2026
- 2026 Has 27 Bi-Weekly Pay Periods: What That Means for Employers
- EEOC Releases Guidance on National Origin Discrimination and Anti-American Bias
- Update: “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” (OBBBA) IRS Gives Employers Relief on 2025 Tip & Overtime Reporting
- Annual Gag Clause Attestations – Deadline **December 31, 2025**
- EEOC Increases Penalty for Violations of “Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination” Notice-posting Requirements – Final Rule Published **Sep 30, 2025**
- DHS Ends Automatic Extension of Employment Authorization – **Oct 30, 2025**
- Benefit Plans Starting September 1 - Employer’s CMS Part D Creditable Coverage Online Disclosure – **October 31, 2025**
- Treasury Dept Issues List of Jobs Qualifying for new Tip Income Deduction under “One Big Beautiful” Act
- IRS Raises ACA Affordability Threshold for 2026 Plan Year
- DOJ Defines “Illegal DEI,” Warns Recipients of Federal Funds to Take Notice
- DOL Ceases Enforcement of Liquidated Damages in FLSA Investigations
- FTC Ends Pursuit of Non-Compete Prohibition
- Navigating Employee Political Speech: Considerations for Employers
- One Big Beautiful Bill Act: Overtime and Tips Taxes
- One Big Beautiful Bill Act: Expanded Telehealth Relief and Student Loan Repayment Benefits
- One Big Beautiful Bill Act: Workplace Immigration Enforcement



- OSHA Issues Updated Penalty & Debt Collection Guidelines to Support Small Businesses – Eff **July 14, 2025**
- E-Verify: E-Verify Users Must Generate Status Change Reports to ID Terminated Work Authorizations -Eff **June 23, 2025**
- Compliance Reminder: PCORI – Due **July 31, 2025**
- DOL Relaunches Option Letters Program
- State Court Ruling Remote Employee Sues MA Employer for Violating MA Employment Laws and Wins
- Court Scraps EEOC Guidance on Pronoun, Restroom & Dress
- DOL Retracts Biden-Era Independent Contractor Classification Rule
- Trump Admin Will Not Enforce Final Rule on Mental Health Parity
- Exec Order: Aim to Reduce Drug Costs
- RxDC Reporting Carrier Deadlines – **June 1, 2025 Filing**
- 2024 EEO-1 Reporting – **May 20-June 24, 2025**
- President Trump Issues Executive Order Aimed at Eliminating Disparate Impact Liability
- ADA Accommodations, Even if Employees CAN perform Essential Functions
- President Trump & DEI Executive Orders
- EEOC & DOJ Issue Guidance on DEI-related Discrimination
- Update: IRS Issues Guidance on Alternative Distribution Method for Form 1095-C
- Corporate Transparency Act – Enforcement Paused
- NLRB Rescinds Biden-Era Policy Guidance on Non-Compete Agreements
- Update: Federal Court Blocks Aspects of Executive Orders Targeting DEI Efforts
- Update: Federal Government Contractors May No Longer Have 90 Days to Comply With Trump Administration's DEI Executive Order
- Shifts in NLRB Strategic Goals & Policy
- Shift in DOL Wage & Hour Unpaid Overtime Claims & Burden of Proof
- DOL Releases ERISA Enforcement 2024 Audit Results
- OSHA Form 300 Accidents, Posting and Submission Compliance Obligations – **Feb-March 2025**
- Creditable Coverage Determination 2025
- Part D Creditable Coverage Online Disclosure to CMS – **March 1, 2025 (for calendar year benefit plan years)**
- DOL Opinion Letter: FMLA & State PFML Management of PTO Usage
- DOL Opinion Letter: Managers & Tip-pool for Nonsupervisory Time
- ACA Reporting Requirement Changes
- Executive Order: Illegal DEI Efforts – Federal Contractors - **April 21, 2025**
- Article: Best Practices for Employers in Managing USCIS Administrative Onsite Inspections, ICE Raids & Form I-9 Audits.
- Supreme Court: Clarifies Evidence Standard for FLSA Overtime Exemption Disputes
- DOL Announces Dual Jobs Final Rule
- OSHA Revises PPE Standard for Construction Industry
- Form I-9: EAD Automatic Extension Period Lengthened
- 2025 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate
- Corporate Transparency Act (BOI Disclosure Requirements) Halted Ahead of Jan 1 (as of Dec 26, 2024)
- Gag Clause Attestation - **Dec. 31, 2024**
- PCORI Fee Amount Adjusted for 2025 – **Due July 31, 2025**
- Federal: DOL's 2024 Exempt Salary Rule Struck Down
- NLRB Prohibits Captive Audience Meetings
- NLRB Expands Definition of "Unlawful Communication" to Employees Concerning Effects of Unionization on Employer-Employee Relationship
- Federal Retirement & Benefit Limits – **2025**
- Draft Forms & Instructions for 2024 ACA Reporting Now Available
- ACA & Affordability - **2025**
- HIPAA Policies/Practices for New Reproductive Health Care Rights

See the ***"Previously Reported Regulatory Matters"*** Attachment for details pertaining to above referenced reminders.



SECTION III: Noteworthy State/City Compliance New Regulatory Announcements & Reminders

[<Review the December 2025 HR WIRE for all January 1 Enactments>](#)

California

New! State Issues New Workplace Poster for Paid Sick Leave

CA Paid Sick Leave Poster/Notice: The state has published a new workplace paid sick leave notice that includes new reasons for leave dated January 2026. Employers should make sure they display the latest version of the poster where it can be easily read by employees. Access [workplace poster](#) **NOTE:** ETC released an updated CA State Handbook Addendum in December which reflects all of the covered reasons for leave under CA's Paid Sick Leave regulations.

New! Pay Data Reporting Temporary Templates & FAQs Released Deadline May 13, 2026 & Portal Opens Feb 2, 2026

California's annual pay data reporting submission this year is **due on May 13, 2026**. Each cycle, the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) typically releases updated guidance for that year's reporting in early February.

Background

California law requires private **employers of 100 or more employees** and/or **100 or more workers hired through labor contractors** to annually report pay, demographic, and other workforce data to the Civil Rights Department (CRD). This reporting is required under Government Code section 12999, as amended by Senate Bill 1162.

Determine whether the employer is required to file a Payroll Employee Report for Reporting Year 2025 by counting the total number of payroll employees inside and outside of California in 2025. If the employer has 100 or more payroll employees, and at least 1 California employee, the employer is required to file.

CRD has already provided [preliminary templates for payroll employee and labor contractor pay data reporting](#) and related [Frequently Asked Questions](#). These preliminary templates are intended to be simplified versions of the final filing templates to help employers get familiar with the format and data fields in advance of the reporting deadline. Though neither final nor compelled by regulation, the preliminary templates reflect material changes to this year's data collection.

New Data Elements:

CRD adds three mandatory data fields to the pay data report:

1. Exemption status (exempt or non-exempt)
2. Employment type (full-time, part-time, or intermittent)
3. Total annual weeks worked (aggregated by employee group)

These fields apply across both the Payroll Employee reports and the Labor Contractor Employee reports. In addition to receiving compensation data organized by job category, pay band, race/ethnicity, and sex, the updates further break out the submission by exemption status and employment type.



Reminders

Although not new, the FAQ reiterates how employers must calculate total annual hours worked for both exempt and non-exempt employees.

For exempt employees, employers must use:

- actual tracked hours, if available; or
- a reasonable estimation based on days worked and paid time off multiplied by average daily hours.

CRD emphasizes that the 2025 templates are preliminary and may change. Final templates, instructions, and guidance will be released when the reporting portal opens in February 2026. The preliminary templates are nonetheless instructive. They reflect how CRD expects data to be structured and the types of analyses it is preparing to perform.

Practical Preparation Steps for Employers

Employers preparing for the 2025 reporting cycle should consider the following steps now:

- Audit exemption classifications and reconcile them with job duties and pay practices.
- Standardize employment type definitions across establishments and apply them consistently.
- Confirm system capability to calculate weeks worked and hours worked accurately.
- Document methodologies used for estimating exempt employee hours.
- Run a dry-run analysis using the preliminary templates to identify gaps or inconsistencies.
- Coordinate legal, HR, payroll, and data teams early in the process.

Filing Portal Open Feb 2nd [California Pay Data Reporting homepage](#)

Reminder: State's Annual Workplace Rights Notices – Deadline Feb 1, 2026

Starting February 1, 2026, California employers must provide stand-alone written notices to all current employees informing them of certain compensation, union organizing rights, and certain constitutional rights. On October 12, 2025, Governor Gavin Newsom signed ([Senate Bill \("SB"\) 294](#)) into law, which codifies the **Workplace Know Your Rights Act**. The law also clarifies employers' duties if an employee is arrested during work.

- By **January 1, 2026**, the Labor Commissioner will provide a template notice for employers and also develop video resources on the law's rights and requirements. [2026 Know Your Rights Notice](#)
- By **February 1, 2026**, employers must **provide the notice to all current employees**.
- By **March 30, 2026**, employers must give employees—and any new hire—the opportunity to **designate an emergency contact** to be reached in the event of the employee's arrest.

Notice Requirements and Covered Employees

Employers should provide updated notices annually thereafter, and to new employees upon hire. Employers must provide the notice in the appropriate language depending on the employee. English is sufficient for any language not provided in a template notice. The law covers all current employees.

Reminder: State Amended Pay Transparency (under SB 642) & California Equal Pay Act (CEPA) Eff Jan 1, 2026

The amendments clarify the pay scale that is to be included in job postings under the pay transparency law and extend the statute of limitations, amend damages calculations and create new definitions under the CEPA. Applicable to Employers with 15 or more employees.

Reminder: State Bans TRAPs & Stay-or-Pay Provisions (as seen in many Sign-On Bonus Programs) – Jan 1, 2026

State FAMLI Headcount Report Filing **Due Feb 28, 2026**

Employers with employees in the state of Colorado are required to register with Colorado FAMLI (Family and Medical Leave Insurance) and update their total employee headcount every year with the State to ensure they are accurately paying Colorado FAMLI premium rates.

If your Annual Total Employee headcount is not updated by February 28, the FAMLI Division will assume you have 10 or more employees, and be required to send in the applicable percentage of wages each quarter.

Counting Employees:



Complete the Reporting Requirements on the State's Portal <https://famli.colorado.gov/employers>

Reminder: Updated FAMLI Notice Released & Upcoming Coverage of Neonatal Care

Colorado has posted an updated [notice](#) for 2026 for its paid family and medical leave program, called FAMLI. The most significant change in the updated notice is that it now reflects the addition of neonatal care leave.

Neonatal Care Leave

Last spring, Colorado amended the FAMLI law to add an extra 12 weeks of leave for parents with a child receiving inpatient care in a neonatal intensive care unit, effective Jan. 1, 2026. The notice now includes information about neonatal care leave. **NOTE:** ETC has released the updated Colorado State Handbook Addendum addressing coverage for Neonatal care July 2025.

Delaware

Reminder: Paid Family & Medical Leave – Eff Jan 1, 2026

Starting January 1, 2026, employees can begin filing claims through Delaware's paid family and medical leave program (Paid Leave). Employers with 10 or more employees in the state are required to participate and provide employees with job-protected leave.

Massachusetts

Reminder: State EEO Wage & Workforce Data Reporting Due Feb 1, 2026

Covered employers are [required](#) to file their federal EEO-1 Reports with the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by filing deadline is February 2 (for 2026, as February 1 falls on a weekend).

Applicability: Employers are subject to this requirement if they

- Have 100 or more employees with a primary place of work in the Commonwealth, *and*
- Are required to file a federal EEO Report.



As a reminder, employers with at least 25 Massachusetts employees must also disclose pay ranges in job postings and at the time an individual applies for a promotion or transfer, starts a new position, or requests the range for the current position. This requirement went into effect in October 2025.

Resources: The Attorney General's office has provided [guidance](#) and [FAQs](#) to help employers interpret this statute, and the [filing portal](#) is open.

Reminder: State's Issued PFML Rate 1.1.226 & PFML Notice 12.2.25

The Massachusetts Department of Family and Medical Leave has [issued](#) updated rate sheets, notices and a workplace poster for employer use in 2026. Failure to comply with the law's notice requirements can result in employer fines.

By statute, employers must provide each new hire with a [written notice](#) about PFML **within 30 days of "the beginning date of the employee's employment."** The employer must obtain the employee's **written acknowledgment of receipt** or have the employee sign a statement that they refused to sign the acknowledgment. The notice must be available in English and each language that is the primary language of five or more individuals in the employer's workforce, if these translations are available from the department.

Contribution rates and benefit amounts for PFML are updated annually, and the law requires **employers to provide current employees** with information on the new contribution rate 30 days before it changes on Jan. 1, 2026, which is **Dec. 2, 2025**. This notice of the rate may be provided electronically and does not require an updated signature. Different rate sheets are available for employers with 25 or more covered employees and for smaller employers.

Minnesota

Reminder: Paid Family & Medical Leave in Effect – Jan 1, 2026

Note: ETC's MN State Handbook Addendum released December 2025 includes policy language addressing Paid Family Leave under the Minnesota Paid Leave policy.

Also, the Paid Leave law requires employers to display a workplace poster about the program by Dec. 1, 2025. Further, these Employee Notices must be acknowledged by the employee in writing or electronically

Reminder: State's Meal & Rest Break Amendment in Effect – Jan 1, 2026

New Jersey

New! Changes to New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA) Forthcoming – Eff July 2026

New Jersey has [enacted](#) amendments to its Family Leave Act (NJFLA) that apply the law to smaller employers and reduce eligibility requirements for employees. The amendments also add job protection for employees receiving benefits under the state temporary disability insurance (TDI) and family leave insurance (FLI) programs. The changes are contained in Assembly Bill (AB) 3451 and take effect **July 17, 2026**. More details to come ahead of the effective date.

New York

New! State Restricts Use of Credit History in Employment Decisions Eff April 18, 2026

On Dec. 19, 2025, New York passed a [law](#) restricting the use of an employee's credit history in making employment decisions in most circumstances. The law is scheduled to take effect on April 18, 2026.

Employer Takeaway: Employers are encouraged to review current hiring and onboarding practices to ensure that they do not request or use an applicant's or employee's consumer credit history in making employment decisions for positions in New York or with respect to individuals located in New York, unless subject to one of the



exceptions. New York City employers are likely already familiar with and in compliance with these requirements, as the new state law largely tracks a similar New York City law.

Overview of the New Law

Under the new law, employers are prohibited from requesting or using the consumer credit history of an applicant or employee for employment purposes, or otherwise discriminating against an applicant or employee in regard to hiring, compensation, or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment based on their consumer credit history.

Consumer credit history means an individual's creditworthiness, credit standing, credit capacity or payment history, as indicated by a consumer credit report, credit score or information an employer obtains from an individual regarding credit account details, bankruptcies, judgments or liens.

Exceptions

However, these requirements do not apply with respect to:

- Employers, or agents thereof, that are legally required to use an individual's consumer credit history for employment purposes;
- Peace officers, police officers, law enforcement positions or positions with an investigative function in a law enforcement agency;
- Appointed positions that are subject to background investigations by a state agency and in which a high degree of public trust has been reposed;
- Positions required to be bonded under law;
- Positions with a legally required security clearance;
- Nonclerical positions having regular access to trade secrets, intelligence information or national security information;
- Positions with signatory authority over third-party funds or assets valued at \$10,000 or more or that involve a fiduciary responsibility to the employer with the authority to enter into financial agreements valued at \$10,000 or more on behalf of the employer; or
- Positions with regular duties that allow the employee to modify digital security systems established to prevent the unauthorized use of the employer's or client's networks or databases.

Employers may request or receive consumer credit history information pursuant to a lawful subpoena, court order or law enforcement investigation.

New! State Expands Paid Family Leave for Construction Workers Eff January 2027

New York has enacted a [bill](#) amending the state's [paid family leave \(PFL\) law](#) to provide coverage for certain collectively bargained workers in construction and related trades. The amendments do not take effect until **January 2027**.

Assembly Bill A4727

Assembly Bill A4727, which amends the PFL law, establishes a new eligibility standard for construction employees who work for multiple employers pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement. These employees will become eligible for PFL if they have been in employment for at least 26 of the last 39 weeks with a covered employer that is signatory to a collective bargaining agreement. This means that construction employees may be eligible even if their weeks of work were with different employers and not fully consecutive.

"Construction Employees"

Construction employees are employees who perform construction, demolition, reconstruction, excavation, rehabilitation, repairs, renovations, alterations or improvements for multiple employers pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

ETC does not typically track or report on industry specific enactments. Applicable employers are encouraged to make note of this upcoming obligation, track updates and ensure compliance ahead of the effective date.



New! Covered Employers Required to Include Opioid Antagonist in First Aid Kits – Eff June 10, 2026

In response to the growing number of opioid emergencies, Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) signed [Senate Bill S5922/A2725](#) into law, requiring private employers to include an opioid antagonist where first aid kits are required by federal law.

In addition, Gov. Hochul secured an agreement with the New York Legislature to [amend the Bill](#) to:

- Clarify that opioid antagonists must be kept in the workplace, but not in every individual first aid kit.
- Ensure consistency between this law and other existing opioid overdose prevention programs.
- Require the New York State Department of Labor to issue rules addressing workplace training and quantities of the antagonists that must be maintained, and to give employers time to comply.

The law will go into effect on June 10.

Who is covered?

This law applies to **private employers** in the State of New York who are **mandated by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration to have first aid kits**. “Employer” is defined as “any person, corporation, limited liability company, or association employing any individual in any occupation, industry, trade, business, or service.” [OSHA regulations](#) provide that, if an infirmary, clinic, or hospital is not close to the workplace, adequate first aid supplies must be readily available.

Employer protections

Addressing the concern about legal implications associated with administering opioid antagonists, New York law provides certain legal protections to employers:

- [Public Health Law § 3309\(4\)\(b\)](#) provides civil, criminal, and professional liability protections for individuals and organizations who administer opioid antagonists reasonably and in good faith.
- [The New York State 911 Good Samaritan Law](#) provides protections against criminal liability for individuals who call for emergency assistance in the event of a drug or alcohol overdose that requires emergency medical care.

Reminder: NYC Updated Safe & Sick Time & Scheduling Laws - Eff Feb 22, 2026

Reminder: State’s Ban on Stay-or-Pay Agreements Eff Dec 19, 2025

As a reminder, on **Dec. 19, 2025**, New York passed the [Trapped at Work Act](#) (Act), which bans employers from entering into stay-or-pay agreements with workers. The law went into effect immediately.

Employer Takeaway: Employers are encouraged to review and update existing employment contract templates to ensure they do not contain any unlawful stay-or-pay provisions. Employers may also consider revising any unlawful contracts or repayment programs to comply with one of the law’s enumerated exceptions.

Overview of the Act

As of Dec. 19, 2025, employers are prohibited from requiring any worker or prospective worker to enter into an agreement, as a condition of employment, that requires the worker to pay the employer, or the employer’s agent or assignee, a sum of money if the worker leaves employment before the passage of a stated period of time (commonly referred to as a stay-or-pay agreement).

Exceptions

However, employers and workers may enter into agreements that:

- Require the worker to repay to the employer any sums advanced by the employer, unless such sums were used to pay for training related to the worker’s employment with the employer;
- Require the worker to pay the employer for any property it has sold or leased to the worker;
- Require educational personnel to comply with any terms or conditions of sabbatical leave granted by their employer; or



- Are entered into as part of a collective bargaining agreement.

Penalties

Employers who violate the Act may be subject to fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per violation. In addition, an employee who is sued by an employer to enforce an unenforceable stay-or-pay agreement may be able to recover attorney fees.

Ohio

New! Construction Contractors Required To Verify Employees' Work Eligibility Through the Federal E-Verify Program Eff **March 20, 2026**

Although ETC does not regularly monitor regulatory enactments pertaining to specific industries, impacted employers are advised to understand the impact on the below regulation as it pertains to their organization.

Governor DeWine signed the E-Verify Workforce Integrity Act (Ohio General Assembly Substitute House Bill No. 246) which requires all construction contractors, subcontractors or labor brokers, excluding those who work on residential construction, to verify every new employee's work eligibility through the federal E-Verify Program. The E-Verify Program is a program that helps an employer determine the eligibility of its employees to work in the United States. Contractors are required to keep records of the verification for the duration of the employee's employment or for three years, whichever is longer. A contractor must terminate an employee's employment if it receives notice of non-confirmation of an individual's ability to work in the United States.

The Act applies to any construction project involving construction or renovation of a building, highway, bridge, utility or related infrastructure, but it does not include things such as manufactured homes, residential buildings, buildings or structures that are incidental to the use of the land on which it is located for agricultural purposes or a mobile home.

Pennsylvania

Reminder: Philadelphia Expands Its "Ban the Box"/ Criminal History Protections – Eff **Jan 6, 2026**

Reminder: State Amends "Crown Act" Regulations /Expanded Protections for Race & Religion - Eff **Jan 24, 2026**

Reminder: Pittsburg's Amended Paid Sick Leave Updates in Effect – **Jan 1, 2026**

Texas

New! Texas Attorney General Releases Opinion Letter Related DEI

Texas's Attorney General recently issued a 74-page [Opinion](#) questioning the legality of various Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives across the state in both public and private sectors, alleging that the below five employer initiatives where "present day DEI practices" can potentially lead to legal exposure:

- hiring and promotion processes;
- pay, bonuses, and promotion goals;
- employee resource groups, mentoring, and training;
- supplier diversity; and
- governance structures and public goals.
-

Key Takeaways: Employers are encouraged to examine all DEI-related policies and ensure that these policies do not give preference or impose illegal requirements based on any protected characteristics. This includes reviewing job postings, application forms, internal training materials and programs. Employers are encouraged to consider



broader inclusion efforts that don't single out or favor any demographic groups to avoid allegations of preferential treatment.

Washington

New! New Workplace Violence Law for Healthcare Settings - Eff Jan 1, 2026

HB 1162 builds on the 2019 workplace violence prevention law by **requiring more frequent and detailed reviews of workplace violence incidents in healthcare settings**. (Healthcare settings include certain hospitals, hospice and home care agencies, and evaluation and treatment facilities.) It requires healthcare settings to promptly investigate every workplace violence incident, including identifying the factors that contributed to or caused the incident. Healthcare settings must also submit quarterly summaries of each incident—and the related investigations and analyses—to their safety committee or workplace violence committee, unless an exception applies. Under the amended law, healthcare settings must also conduct an annual comprehensive review and update of their workplace violence prevention plans. By contrast, the current law requires developing and implementing these plans only every three years.

Employer Takeaway: Employers in healthcare settings should review the enactment and update their workplace policies and procedures accordingly. Employers should also be prepared to train staff on how to properly report, document, and investigate incidents of workplace violence to ensure compliance.

New! Enhanced Workplace Safety Standards for Applicable Isolated Employees - Eff Jan 1, 2026

HB 1524 applies to hotels, motels, retail businesses, security guard companies, and property services contractors that employ at least one isolated worker.

HB 1524 updates the definition of "isolated employee" and imposes new requirements for panic buttons, which isolated employees must carry. ("Isolated employee" is defined as a janitor, security guard, hotel or motel housekeeper, or room service attendant who either "[p]erforms work in an area where two or more coworkers, supervisors, or a combination thereof are unable to immediately respond to an emergency without being summoned by the employee" or "spends at least 50 percent of her or his working hours without a supervisor or coworker present.") Employers must train isolated employees on the proper use of panic buttons and instruct managers and supervisors on their responsibilities to respond to panic button alerts. The amendment also sets minimum standards for panic buttons, including ease of use. Employers are required to maintain records of panic button purchases, usage, and training. Willful violations may result in civil penalties of \$1,000 per violation and up to \$10,000 for repeat violations.

Employer Takeaway: Employers of isolated employees should review the regulatory requirements and update both their policies and procedures regarding the use of panic buttons to ensure compliance with the new requirements.

Reminder: State's Released PFML Premium Rates & Amended Requirements - Jan 1, 2026

Reminder: State's Minimum Wage & Minimum Salary Threshold Increases – Jan, 2026

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**See the "*Previously Reported Regulatory Matters*" Attachment
for details regarding state-specific reported matters**

Alaska

- State Paid Sick Leave Regulations take Effect – Eff Sept 25, 2025



- State's Captive Audience Ban – Eff July 1, 2025
- Updated Min Wage & Saley Exempt Salary Threshold – July 1, 2025
- New Paid Sick Leave Regulations - July 1, 2025
- State Votes in Favor of Captive Audience Ban – July 1, 2025

Arizona

- State Increases Minimum Wage – Eff Jan 1, 2026

California

- State's Annual Workplace Rights Notices – Deadline Feb 1, 2026
- Increased Minimum Wages – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State Increases Computer Professional Exemption Wage Rate – Jan 1, 2026
- State Adds Leave Rights: Jurors, Witnesses & Crime Victims – Oct 1, 2025 & Jan 1, 2026
- State Amends Annual Pay Data Reporting Requirements – Jan 1, 2026 & 2027
- State Amends Annual Pay Transparency & Equal Pay Laws – Jan 1, 2026
- State Bans TRAPs & Stay-or-Pay Provisions (as seen in many Sign-On Bonus Programs) – Jan 1, 2026
- State Expands CalWARN Notice Content Requirements – Jan 1, 2026
- State Law Expands Unpaid Wage Judgement Enforcement – Jan 1, 2026
- State Regulation IVF Coverage Mandate – Eff 2026
- Los Angeles Updates Freelance Worker Protections Ordinance
- Personnel Records Changes – Incl Education & Training Records (SB 513)– Eff Oct 11, 2025
- State Expands PFL Eligibility to "Designated Persons" (SB 590) – Eff July 1, 2026 with Funded Benefits Available July 1, 2025
- State Increases Computer Professional Exemption Wage Rate – Jan 1, 2026
- State Adds Leave Rights (right to use paid sick leave under the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act applies to the juror and witness leaves – Oct 1, 2025
- State Adds Leave Rights for Victims of Specific Crimes (AB 2499) – Time off to attend judicial proceedings – Can use PTO, Personal Leave & Paid Sick Leave – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State Amends Annual Pay Data Reporting Requirements – Modifying Storage Requirements Jan 1, 2026
- State Amends Annual Pay Transparency & Equal Pay Laws (SB 642) – Clarify Pay Scale on Job Postings - Jan 1, 2026
- State Bans TRAPs & Stay-or-Pay Provisions in Employment Contracts – bans certain training and retention repayment provisions (TRAPs) and other stay-or-pay provisions in employment contracts Jan 1, 2026
- Immigration Rights Notice & Named Emergency Designee – Feb 1 & Mar 30, 2026
- State Expands CalWARN Notice Content Requirements – Jan 1, 2026
- State Law Expands Unpaid Wage Judgement Enforcement – Jan 1, 2026
- Upcoming Minimum Wage Increases – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State Publishes Required Victim Leave Notice – July 1, 2025
- State Regulation IVF Coverage Mandate - 2026
- Regulations Addressing AI & Employment Discrimination - October 1, 2025
- Min Wage Increases – July 1, 2025
- State's Pay Data Report Filing - Platform Open Feb 3, 2025 & Filing Due – May 14, 2025
- San Francisco Health Care Security & Fair Chance Ordinance Annual Reporting – May 2, 2025
- California's Bird Flu State of Emergency Notice Requirements
- San Diego County Fair Chance Ordinance - Oct 10, 2024
- Upcoming Local Minimum Wage Ordinance Increases – Jan 1, 2025
- State Expands Discrimination Protections – Jan 1, 2025
- State Passes Freelance Worker Protections Act – Jan 13, 2025
- Paid Sick Leave Expansion – Jan 1, 2025
- State Amends Victim Leave for Employees – Jan 1, 2025
- Jury & Witness Duty Leave Oversight & Enforcement Change– Jan 1, 2025
- State Passes Captive Audience Ban – Jan 1, 2025
- Expanded Use of CA Paid Sick Leave – Jan 1, 2025



- CA Employers Lose Option to Require Vacation Leave Before PFL – Jan 1, 2025
- Workplace Safety Enacted Provisions Effective Jan 1, 2025
- CA Disability Insurance Updates – Jan 1, 2025
- Small Employer Mediation Program – Permanent – Jan 1, 2025
- CA PAGA FAQ Published
- State Transparency Requirements-Child Labor Practices– Jan 1, 2025

Colorado

- Minimum Wage Increases – Jan 1, 2026
- State Adds to FAMLI Leave – NICU Baby Stays - Jan 1, 2026
- State Clarifies Gender Expression - May 16, 2025
- State Clarifies Job Protection Rules Under FAMLI Leave – July 1, 2025
- Biometric Information Requirements – July 1, 2025
- State Enacts Significant Wage & Hour Amendments – Aug 6, 2025
- State Enacts Comprehensive AI Legislation - Feb 1, 2025
- State FAMLI Rules Include Coordination of Benefits with other Leave Benefits & Employer Penalties
- Holiday Incentive Pay in Regular Rate of Pay Calculation

Connecticut

- State Increases Minimum Wage – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- Updated State Paid Sick Leave Regulations – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State Expands Victim Protections – Eff Oct 1, 2025
- State Issues FAQs in New Paid Sick Leave Requirements – Jan 1, 2025
- Expands Family Violence Leave – Oct 2024 (Updated State Handbook Addendum released 7.2024)
- Connecticut Expands Paid Sick Leave Law (HB 5005)– Jan 1, 2025

Delaware

- State Enacts Pay Transparency – Eff Sept 26, 2027
- Paid Family & Medical Leave Labor Notice – Distribution Deadline Dec 2, 2025 & Benefits Effective Jan 1, 2026
- Key Deadlines Approaching for Paid Family Medical Leave (19 DAC 1401)–Dec 1 & 2; Jan 1, '25
- State Added Housing Status as a Protected Characteristic “Housing Status” – Sept 26, 2024

District of Columbia

- Tipped Minimum Wage Increase & Changed Effective Date– Moved to Oct 1 & Tipped Min Wage June 30, 2025
- Minimum Wage Increase – July 1, 2025
- Universal Paid Leave Act’s Paid Family Leave Notice – Feb 1, 2025

Florida

- State Minimum Wage Increases – Eff Sept 30, 2025
- State’s Non-Compete Bill Becomes Law – July 2025

Georgia

- State Eliminates Subminimum Wage – July 1, 2025

Hawaii

- State Minimum Wage Increases – Jan 1, 2026

Illinois

- Expanded Protections Under The Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act – Eff Immediately, Dec 12th
- Updated State Regulations: Neonatal Intensive Care Leave, Military, Funeral Honors and Paid Break Time for Nursing Mothers
- State’s Changes to Employee Blood & Organ Donation Leave Act – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State’s Paid Break Time for Nursing Mothers – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- Changes in State Insurance Law Extends Coverage to Certain Parents of Insured Individuals – Jan 1, 2026
- State’s Neonatal Intensive Care Leave – Eff June 1, 2026
- Amended Wage Transparency Act – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- State Passes Safety & Workplace Act – (Private employers in Illinois must continue to follow the original, more protective OSHA standards if federal rules are weakened) Retro Eff Aug 14, 2025
- State’s Military Funeral Honors Detail Leave Law – Eff Aug 1, 2025
- State Amends Equal Pay Act to Separate It from Federal EEO-1 Reporting



- State Expands Annual Equal Pay Registration Certificate Requirements
- City of Chicago Minimum Wage & Fair Workweek Threshold Increase Regulations - **July 1, 2025**
- City of Chicago Updated Paid Sick Leave Payouts – **July 1, 2025**
- State Amends 1 Day in 7 Act to Prohibit Retaliation
- Cook County Revises Mandatory Paid Leave Rules – Issued April 10, 2025
- Court Decision: Pay Calculations for Nondiscretionary Performance Bonuses & OT
- Navigating Updated State E-Verify and I-9 Compliance Requirements – **Jan 1, 2025**
- Expanded Employee Protections (HB 2161 amending Illinois Human Rights Act) for “Family Responsibilities” – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Enacts Whistle Blower Act – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Issues FAQs – Pay Transparency Law – **Jan 1, 2025**
- Cook County Updates Paid Leave Guidance Issued – **Oct 24, 2024**
- IL Amended Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act (SB 508) – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Grants Employees the Right to Inspect Pay Stubs Upon Request (SB 3208 & HB 3763) – **Jan 1, 2025**
- Worker Freedom of Speech Act – Captive Audience Prohibition (SB 3649)- **Jan 1, 2025**
- Human Rights Act Amended - Expansion of Protected Classes (HB 4867, HB 1261, SB 3310 & HB 5371) – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Enacts New Child Labor Laws (SB 3646) – **Jan 1, 2025**
- Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act (IWPCA) Amended - Employees the Right to Inspect Pay Stubs Upon Request (SB 3208) – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Pay Transparency Laws & Equal Pay Act applicable to smaller employers (HB 3129) – **Jan 1, 2025**

Indiana

- State Enacts Employee Conference Leave – Eff **July 1, 2025**

Iowa

- State Requires Equal Treatment for Employees Who Adopt Children (Parity for Adoptive Parents) - **July 1, 2025**
- State Drug Testing Regulatory Updates – **July 1, 2025**

Maine

- State Increases Minimum Wage – Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- Updates: Reporting Time Pay & Earned Paid Leave – Eff **Sept 24, 2025**
- Paid Family & Medical Leave – [PFML Final Rule](#) Issued by State with Payroll withholdings commencing **Jan 1, 2025** (Benefits Available **5/1/26**)
- Maine’s Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML) Launches (Wage withholding, Workplace Poster & Written Notice requirements) – **Jan 1, 2025**

Maryland

- State Expands Deployment Leave – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State’s Mandatory Notice Requirements in Effect for Mass Layoffs or RIFS – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State Amends Parental Leave Act – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State’s Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program/Time to Care Act – Expanded Leave Rights – **Updated eff dates: Jan 1, 2027 & Jan 2028**
- Multiple Employment Laws Updated Effective – **Oct 1, 2024**
- Maryland Adopts Heat Stress Standards – **Sept 20, 2024**

Massachusetts

- State Issues Rate and PFML Notice + Workplace Poster Eff – **Dec 2, 2025 and Jan 1, 2026**
- Upcoming Annual Wage Data Reporting Obligations – Eff **Feb 1, 2026**
- MA Paid Family & Medical Leave Updates from the Department (Portal Updates & updated Exempt Private Employer Reporting Deadline) - **August 31, 2025**
- State Enacts Salary Range Transparency Obligations – **Oct 29, 2025**
- Pay Transparency Annual Submission of EEO Data to State – **Feb Annually** (ERs >100 Employees submit EEO Data) & **July 2025** (ERs with 25 or more Employees must disclose salary ranges in job postings)
- Employers Must Complete HIRD Form - **Dec 15 Annually**
- PFML Rate Sheets & Employee Notices – **Dec 2, 2024**
- Amended State Earned Sick Time to Cover Reproductive Loss – **Nov 21, 2024**
- MA 2025 PFML Benefit to Increase – **2025**

Michigan

- State Increases Minimum Wage - Eff **Jan 1, 2025**



- State's Amended Earned Sick Time – ~~Feb 21, 2025~~ **UPDATE: March 23 & Oct 1 (Small Employers)**
- State Expands Child Labor Protections – **April 2 & Oct 2, 2025**
- State Issues FAQs and Other Materials for Earned Sick Time Act – **Feb 21, 2025**
- State Supreme Court Increases Minimum Wage and Paid Sick Leave Requirements – **Feb 2025**

Minnesota

- Change in Sick & Safe Leave Notice Requirement Changes – **Dec 31, 2025**
- State Releases Paid Family Leave Notice – Distribute by **Dec 1, 2025** & benefits effective **Jan 1, 2026**
- Minneapolis & St Paul Paid Sick Leave Ordinances Align with State PSL Regulations – Eff **Dec 31, 2025**
- State Issues Guidance on Meal & Rest Break Amendments - Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Amends Paid Sick Leave & PFML – **July 1, 2025**
- St. Paul's Increased Minimum Wage – **July 1, 2025**
- Minneapolis Amends Anti-Discrimination Regulations - **Aug 1, 2025**
- State Amends Meal & Rest break Requirements – **January 1, 2026**
- State's Leave Guidance Issued for Option Out – Private Plans
- State Makes Several Changes to Work Comp Laws – **Aug & Oct 2024**
- State Paid Leave Wage Reports - **Oct 31, 2024**
- Pay Transparency (Wage Disclosure Protection Law) - **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Amends Sick Leave, Paid Family and Medical Leave ([SF 5234/HF 5247](#))

Missouri

- State Minimum Wage Increase – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Legislature Repeals State's Paid Sick Leave - Eff **Aug 28, 2025**
- State Passes Earned Paid Sick Leave Initiative ([Proposition A](#)) – Notice to Employees – **April 15, 2025** & Leave Accrual Starts **May 1, 2025**

Montana

- Montana Adds Protections for Volunteer Firefighters and EMTs – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State Expands Protections for Elected Officials – Retro Effective Date **Jan 1, 2025**

Nebraska

- State Minimum Wage Increase – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Enacts & Amends Paid Sick Leave – **Sept 15, 2025** (Notice to Employees) & **Oct 1, 2025**, for Leave

Nevada

- State Requires Civil Air Patrol Leave – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State Restricts Working Hours for 16 to 18 Year Olds – **Oct 1, 2025**
- State's Employee Savings Trust Retirement Program Enacted – **July 1, 2025**
- State Approves New Heat Illness Regulation & Employer Obligations – **Nov 15 & Enforcement +90 Days**; Updated Guidance to be enforced starting **April 29, 2025**

New Hampshire

- State Provides Protections for Military Spouses – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Creates Leave for Childbirth & Postpartum Care – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Adds Lactation Protections – **July 1, 2025**
- Firearms in Employee Vehicles ([HB 1336](#)) State Regulation – **Jan 1, 2025**

New Jersey

- State Bans Mandatoy Employee (Captive Audience) Meetings – **Dec 2, 2025**
- Employers' Use of AI Tools to Comply with State's Anti-discrimination Laws
- Expanded Pay Transparency Regulations ([SB 2310](#)) – **June 1, 2025**
- New Jersey Family and Disability Insurance Leave Rates to Increase - **2025**
- Upcoming Deadlines for RetireReady NJ - **Sept & Nov 2024**
- New Jersey Family and Disability Insurance Leave Rates to Increase – **Jan 1, 2025**

New York

- "Trapped at Work Act" Prohibits Employers from Requiring Certain Repayments for Early Separations
- NYC Enacts New Pay Data Reporting Requirements-Employer Obligations **Years Away**
- State to Institute Workplace Violence Prevention Program Requirements for Hospitals & Nursing Homes
- State Increased Minimum Wage – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State's PFL Contribution & Benefit Rates to Increase in 2026 – **Jan 1, 2026**



- **NY City** Expands Scheduling & Workplace Protections for Service and Delivery Workers
- **NY City** Updates 2026 Earned Safe and Sick Time Act (ETTS) – **Feb 22, 2026**
- State Passes Regulations Resulting in Mini State Labor Relations Boards
- State Sunsets Covid-19 Sick Leave – **July 31, 2025**
- State Increases Jury Duty Pay – **June 8, 2025**
- State Retail Workplace-Violence Prevention Obligations - **June 2, 2025 & Jan 1, 2027**
- State Establishes Warehouse Workers Injury Reduction Program Act – **June 1, 2025**
- **NY City** Amends Paid Sick Leave Rule for Prenatal Leave – **July 2, 2025**
- **NY City** Amends Lactation Accommodation Policy - **May 8, 2025**
- State Publishes FAQs for New Paid Prenatal Leave Requirement – **Jan 1, 2025**
- NY Expands Protections for National Guard Service – **Sept 27, 2024**
- New York PFL Contribution and Benefit Rates to Increase in 2025
- Clean Slate Act (Expanded Criminal History Protections - [NY S 940](#))– **Nov 16, 2024**
- Mandated Paid Prenatal Leave ([A08805](#)) – Eff **Jan 1, 2025**

Ohio

- State Increases Minimum Wage – Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- Columbus Enacts Pay Transparency (Pay Ranges in Job Postings) Law - Eff **Dec 3, 2025** with Enforcement starting Jan 1, 2027
- State Enacts Mini-WARN Act Requiring Notice Components in Addition to Federal WARN – **Sept 2, 2025**
- State Allows Electronic Labor Notice Postings – **July 21, 2025**
- **Cleveland** Bans Employer Salary Inquiries & Pay Transparency – **Oct 27, 2025**
- State Enacts Wage Statement Regulations – **April 9, 2025**

Oklahoma

- State Increases Tip Credit – Eff **Nov 1, 2025**

Oregon

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- Workplace Violence Prevention for Healthcare Employers– Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Expands Wage Statement Requirements to Time of Hire – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Allows Sick Leave Use for Blood Donation – **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Expands Age Discrimination Protections – **Sept 28, 2025**
- Updated Min Wage – **July 1, 2025**
- State Expands Age Discrimination Protections – **Sept 28, 2025**
- State Updates Administrative Rules for Paid Leave – **Jan 1, 2025**
- Paid Leave Oregon & OFLA Leave Change - **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Warehouse Quota Notification Requirements – **Jan 1, 2025**

Pennsylvania

- State Amends “Crown Act” Regulations /Expanded Protections for Race & Religion – Eff **Jan 24, 2026**
- **Philadelphia** Expands Its “Ban the Box” Restrictions – Eff **Jan 6, 2026**
- **Pittsburg** Increases Paid Sick Leave – **Jan 1, 2026**
- **Philadelphia** Enacts POWER Act Expanding Worker Protections – **May 27, 2025**
- State Now Permits Direct Deposit Payment of Workers’ Compensation Benefits

Rhode Island

- State Minimum Wage Increase – Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- Temporary Caregiver Insurance (Paid Medical Leave) Expands – Eff **Jan 1, 2026**
- State Rules Clarify Sunday & Holiday Premium Pay Calculations – **Aug 17, 2025**
- State Enacts Accommodations for Menopause, Expanded Protections for Race, Captive Audience Restrictions - **June 24, 2025**
- State Enacts New Written Notice – Payment of Wages - **January 1, 2026**
- State Amends Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) Law – **Jan 1, 2025**
- State Enacts New Consumer Data Privacy Law – **Jan 1, 2025**

South Dakota

- State Increases Minimum Wage – **Jan 1, 2026**

Texas



- State Enacts New Law for Employers Using Artificial Intelligence – Jan 1, 2026
- State Enacts Healthcare Non-competes in Texas – September 1, 2025
- State Expands Medical Marijuana Law – September 1, 2025

Vermont

- State Expands Parental & Family Leave – July 1, 2025
- State Requires Pay Ranges in Job Postings ([VT H 704](#)) – July 1, 2025

Virginia

- State Increases Minimum Wage – Jan 1, 2026
- Penalties for Failure to Respond to State Unemployment Claims – July 1, 2025
- State Enacts New Healthcare Workplace Violence Incident Reporting Requirements – July 1, 2025

Washington

- State Announces PFML Premium Rate for 2026 – Eff Jan 1, 2026
- Min Wage Increases – Jan 1, 2026
- State Regulations Related to Transportation Network Companies – Eff Sept 1, 2025 & July 1, 2026
- State Expands Domestic Violence Leave – Jan 1, 2026
- State Amends Paid Family & Medical Leave Requirements – Jan 1, 2026
- Updated Local Minim Wage Changes – July 1, 2025
- Protection from Coercion Based on Immigration Status – July 1, 2025
- Limits of Driver's License Requirements – July 1, 2025
- State Enacts Mini-WARN Act – July 2025
- Equal Pay & Opportunities Act & Amendments – Salary Ranges on Job Postings - July 1, 2025
- Employee Access to Personnel Records Regulations – July 27, 2025
- State Paid Sick Leave to Cover Immigration Proceedings – July 27, 2025
- State Expands Criminal History Law – Eff July 1, 2026 & July 1, 2027
- State Amends PFML to Limit Stacking & Expansion of Job Protection – Jan 1, 2026
- State Passes Leave, Job Protections for Hate Crimes – Jan 1, 2026
- State Announces PFML Premium Rate for 2025 – Jan 1, 2025
- State Expansion of Paid Sick Leave ([SB 5793](#)) – Jan 1, 2025

West Virginia

- State Regulatory Changes – Hiring Preference Military Spouses & Work Permit Requirements for Minors - July 2025

Wisconsin

- Wisconsin Arrest Record Protections Clarified by State Supreme Court – Reported May 2025

The HR WIRE is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice.