

OCTOBER 29, 2024 | STATE & LOCAL TRENDS

Employers Take Note: New Employment Laws for California in 2025

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This year, Governor Newsom signed into law various employment bills covering topics such as summary judgment motions, leave laws, independent contractors, and more. These new laws will take effect on January 1, 2025, unless otherwise specified.

AB 1870 (Workers' Compensation Notice)

- California law requires employers to post information related to injury reporting, rights to select treating physicians, and discrimination protections.
- AB 1870 mandates that these postings include a notice informing employees of their right to consult an attorney.

AB 2049 (Summary Judgment Motions)

- Extends the deadline to file a motion for summary judgment from 75 days to 81 days before the hearing.
- Extends the deadline to file an opposition from 14 days to 20 days before the hearing.
- Extends the deadline to file a reply from 5 days to 11 days before the hearing.

AB 2299 (Whistleblower Law Postings)

- California law requires employers to post information about employee rights and responsibilities under whistleblower protections.
- AB 2299 requires the Labor Commissioner to develop a model posting that will satisfy posting requirements.

SB 1137 (Discrimination Claims)

- Amends the Unruh Act and the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) to prohibit discrimination based on any combination of the specified protected characteristics.

AB 2499 (Victims of Violence Leave)

- Expands and recasts jury duty, court, and victim time off as unlawful practices under FEHA, placing them under the Civil Rights Department's (CRD) jurisdiction.
- Allows employees to use vacation, personal, and paid sick leave for time off granted as reasonable accommodations under this provision.
- Requires employers to inform employees of these rights at the time of hire and upon request.

SB 2499 (Victims of Violence Leave)

- Prohibits employers with 25 or more employees from discharging or otherwise retaliating against an employee who is a victim, or has a family member who is a victim, for taking time off for various specified purposes related to a qualifying act of violence.

SB 1100 (Driver's License Discrimination)

- Makes it unlawful for employers to require a driver's license for employment, except when the job duties reasonably require driving and alternative transportation would be unreasonable in terms of travel time or cost to the employer.

AB 2123 (Paid Family Leave)

- Currently, employers can require an employee to use up to two weeks of earned but unused vacation before the employee's initial receipt of Paid Family Leave benefits.
- AB 2123 removes this requirement, making it unlawful.

SB 2011 (Small Employer Family Leave Mediation Program)

- SB 2011 makes the Civil Rights Department's small employer family leave mediation program permanent and includes reproductive loss leave within the program.

SB 988 (Freelance Worker Protection Act)

- Defines "freelance worker" as a person or single-person entity hired as an independent contractor to provide "professional services" for \$250 or more within the previous 120 days.
- "Professional services" retains its meaning under Labor Code 2778(b)(2).
- SB 988 places new requirements on compensation and contract terms for freelance workers.

AB 3234 (Social Compliance Audit)

- Currently, employers may voluntarily conduct a social compliance audit.
- AB 3234 requires employers that conduct such an audit to post a prominent link to a report detailing the findings on their business website.

AB 1843 (Emergency Ambulance Employees)

- Expands the existing Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for emergency ambulance workers to include, upon request, peer support services addressing emotional and professional issues.
- Requires the peer support program to be implemented through a labor-management agreement, negotiated separately from any collective bargaining agreement (CBA) covering the affected employees.
- Includes confidentiality protections and limitations on liability.

SB 399 (Freedom from Employer Intimidation)

- Prohibits employers from taking adverse action against employees who decline to attend employer-sponsored meetings or refuse to receive employer communications regarding the employer's religious or political opinions. Employees who refuse attendance must continue to receive pay.

California Minimum Wage

- The statewide minimum wage will increase from \$16.00 to \$16.50 per hour. Consequently, the salary threshold for exempt employees will rise from \$66,560 per year to \$68,640. Employers should also check local ordinances

for city and county minimum wage rates.

Please contact [us](#) with any questions about this update.