

New York State Approves Changes to Minimum Wage and Paid Family Leave

By: Richard D. Boyle

While many of us have been focused on the presidential election, on April 4, 2016 Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law two pieces of legislation that employers, as well as employees, need to be aware of: (1) A statewide incremental increase in the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour; and (2) Mandated paid family leave ("Paid Leave Act").

Minimum Wage Increase

New York State's minimum hourly wage will increase annually over the next few years. The first increase shall commence on December 31, 2016 and shall encompass all industries (including agricultural related industries). The following chart outlines the scheduled increases:

Location	Increase Date	Hourly Minimum Wage
New York City (11 or more employees)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. December 31, 2016 2. December 31, 2017 3. December 31, 2018 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$11.00 2. \$13.00 3. \$15.00
New York City (10 or less employees)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. December 31, 2016 2. December 31, 2017 3. December 31, 2018 4. December 31, 2019 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$10.50 2. \$12.00 3. \$13.50 4. \$15.00
Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester Counties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. December 31, 2016 2. December 31, 2017 3. December 31, 2018 4. December 31, 2019 5. December 31, 2020 6. December 31, 2021 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$10.00 2. \$11.00 3. \$12.00 4. \$13.00 5. \$14.00 6. \$15.00

Remainder of New York State	1. December 31, 2016	1. \$ 9.70
	2. December 31, 2017	2. \$10.40
	3. December 31, 2018	3. \$11.10
	4. December 31, 2019	4. \$11.80
	5. December 31, 2020	5. \$12.50
	6. December 31, 2021	*Each December 31 st thereafter there shall be an increase published by the Commissioner of Labor which shall not exceed \$15.00 / hour

Paid Leave Act

Commencing in January 2018, employees who have been employed for at least 26 consecutive weeks (or 175 consecutive days for part-time employees), will be eligible for paid family leave. Leave may be taken to provide care to family members, to care for new children during the first 12 months, or to assist with the family when a family member is called to active military service. In addition, employers are required to provide employees' health insurance while on paid leave. Paid leave is funded by your fellow employees. In other words, every employee will have approximately \$1.00 per week deducted from their paychecks to fund the Paid Leave Act.

The eligible paid leave amounts are as follows:

Effective Date	Paid Benefit
January 1, 2018	Up to 8 weeks of leave at 50% of employees weekly wage, but not to exceed state's average 50% weekly wage
January 1, 2019	Up to 10 weeks of leave at 55% of employees weekly wage, but not to exceed state's average 55% weekly wage
January 1, 2020	Up to 10 weeks of leave at 60% of employees weekly wage, but not to exceed state's average 60% weekly wage

January 1, 2021	Up to 12 weeks of leave at 67% of employees weekly wage, but not to exceed state's average 67% weekly wage
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For more information on the minimum wage increases and Paid Leave Act and how this new legislation may impart you please contact the Scolaro Law Firm.