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December 05, 2024

Alaska Ushers in Increased Minimum Wage and Guaranteed Sick Leave



Voters in Alaska approved Ballot Measure 1, which will boost Alaska's minimum wage and provide guaranteed sick leave to workers.

First, Ballot Measure 1 increases Alaska's minimum wage to \$13.00 per hour, effective July 1, 2025, from the current minimum wage of \$11.73 per hour. This represents an increase of \$1.27, or approximately 10.8%. Ballot Measure 1 also implements automatic updates to the minimum wage that will occur each year; minimum wage will increase to \$14.00 per hour effective July 1, 2026, then increase again to \$15.00 per hour July 1, 2027, and thereafter be adjusted annually for inflation.

Second, Ballot Measure 1 will require all employers to provide paid sick leave, effective July 1, 2025. All employees will be entitled to accrue one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked; however, the total amount of sick leave employees may accrue and use in a single year will vary by employer size. Employers with fewer than 15 employees will be permitted to cap accrual and use of sick leave at 40 hours per year, while employers with 15 or more employees will be permitted to cap accrual and use of sick leave at 56 hours per year. Employers must allow employees to carry over all unused paid sick leave into the following year, subject to the use caps previously noted.

Paid sick leave may be utilized in the smaller of hourly increments or the smallest increment that the employer's payroll system uses to account for absences or use of other time for the following purposes: (i) an employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition, including medical diagnosis, care, treatment, or preventative care; (ii) care or assistance to the employee's family member for a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; and/or (iii) absences for specified purposes related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the need for sick leave is foreseeable, then employers may require employees to make a good faith effort to provide notice to the employer in advance of the use of paid sick leave and make a reasonable effort to schedule use of paid sick leave in a manner that does not unduly disrupt the employer's operations. The law is silent with respect to the amount of notice required in the event of an unforeseeable absence. If an employee uses

paid sick leave for four or more consecutive workdays, an employer may require “reasonable” documentation that the paid sick leave has been used for a permissible purpose. However, employers cannot require that such documentation disclose the details of an employee’s or family member’s health or safety information as a condition of providing paid sick leave.

Starting June 1, 2025, or when employment begins (whichever is later), employers must provide employees with a written notice that contains the following information:

- Beginning July 1, 2025, employees are entitled to paid sick leave;
- The amount of paid sick leave that is available;
- The terms of its use that are guaranteed under the law; and
- Prohibition of employer retaliation against employees who request or use paid sick leave.

The law is silent on any other notice or recordkeeping requirements.

Authors

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