

## **Legislative Blast** **April 2016\***

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### **NEW YORK STATE INCREASES MINIMUM WAGE & PASSES FAMILY LEAVE LAW**

Under recently enacted legislation, New York State's minimum wage is scheduled to increase in phases to \$15.00 per hour, and a statewide program of paid family leave will also be phased in.

#### **Minimum Wage Increases (information provided by Governor Cuomo's office):**

- For workers outside New York City, Long Island, and Westchester County, the minimum wage rises to \$9.70 per hour on 12/31/2016, then another \$.70 each year afterward until reaching \$12.50 on 12/31/2020, after which the minimum wage will continue to rise to \$15.00 per hour on an indexed schedule to be set by the Director of the Division of Budget in consultation with the Department of Labor.
- For workers in Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester Counties, the minimum wage rises to \$10.00 per hour on 12/31/16, then \$1.00 each year after until reaching \$15.00 in 2021.
- For workers in New York City employed by businesses with 10 or fewer employees, the minimum wage rises to \$10.50 on 12/31/16, then another \$1.50 each year afterward.
- For workers in New York City employed by businesses with at least 11 employees, the minimum wage rises to \$11.00 on 12/31/16, then another \$2.00 each year afterward.

The legislation provides a safety valve to the increases. Beginning in 2019, the State Division of Budget Director will conduct an annual analysis of the economy in each region and the effect of the minimum wage increases statewide to determine whether a temporary suspension of the scheduled increases is necessary. That analysis will be submitted to the Department of Labor.

#### **Paid Family Leave Benefits (information provided by Governor Cuomo's office):**

Employees working for their employer for at least 6 months will be eligible for paid family leave when caring for an infant, a family member with a serious health condition, or to relieve family pressures when someone is called to active military service. The program is funded entirely through a payroll deduction on employees. Beginning in 2018, benefits will include 8 weeks of paid leave calculated at 50% of an employee's average weekly wage, capped at 50% of the statewide average weekly wage. When fully implemented in 2021, benefits will reach 67% of the employee's average weekly wage, capped at 67% of the statewide average weekly wage.

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\* MVSHRM's April 2016 Legislative Blast is edited by Joseph A. DeTraglia, Esq. of the Utica, New York law firm Getnick Livingston Atkinson & Priore, LLP, who serves as MVSHRM's Legislative Committee Chairperson and as a Past President of the Oneida County Bar Association. He can be reached at 315-797-9261 or at [jdetraglia@getnicklivingston.com](mailto:jdetraglia@getnicklivingston.com).