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Massachusetts' Minimum Wage Set to Increase

July 23, 2014

The minimum wage in Massachusetts is set to increase on January 1, 2015 for the first time since 2008. On June 26, 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed a bill into law which will raise the hourly minimum wage for non-tipped employees from \$8.00 an hour as follows:

- Beginning January 1, 2015, to \$9.00.
- Beginning January 1, 2016, to \$10.00.
- Beginning January 1, 2017, to \$11.00.

The hourly minimum cash wage for tipped workers will increase from \$2.63 to \$3.00 an hour on January 1, 2015, and again to \$3.75 an hour on January 1, 2017. As a result of these increases, Massachusetts' minimum wage will be amongst the highest in the country.

Compliance with Massachusetts' minimum wage laws is important since the failure to do so will result in a violation of the Massachusetts "Payment of Wages" statute, [M.G.L. c.149, §148](#) (the "Wage Act"). Violations of the Wage Act carry a high price and are subject to mandatory [treble \(triple\) damages](#) and attorney's fees, even if an employer has acted in good faith. Wage Act violations can also result in criminal penalties and civil liability for the employer as well for as the president, treasurer, and individual "officers and agents" of the employer.

For more information on the Massachusetts minimum wage increase or wage and hour compliance generally, contact a member of the [Employment Law Group](#).

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