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Rhode Island Raises Minimum Wage Effective January 1, 2018



By Anne Jakala, Esq.

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The Rhode Island state legislature introduced 10 minimum wage increase bills in the 2017 session, which ended June 30. However, they all sat in committees until Governor Gina Raimondo signed the state budget Aug. 3. **As a result, the state's minimum wage rate will increase in 2018 and 2019.**

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Currently, the Rhode Island minimum wage rate is \$9.60, which went into effect Jan. 1, 2016. Previously, the rate increased every year since 2013, but was set to remain at \$9.60 unless raised by law.

Many bills were proposed this year, including a single rate increase to \$10.50 in July 2017, and another, which would gradually raise the rate starting Jan. 1, 2018, until it reached \$15 in 2022, then indexed in 2023. There were also bills to increase minor and "opportunity" wage rates, and tipped minimum wage rates.

The current minimum wage law will be amended to add a rate increase Jan. 1, 2018 to \$10.10, and again Jan. 1, 2019, to \$10.50. However, the tipped minimum wage rate of \$3.89 remains in place. Subsequently, no further rate increases or indexed rate allowances are planned.

Due to the numerous minimum wage rate bills proposed in the 2017 session, it's likely there will be a continued push to increase the general rate, as well as the tipped minimum wage rate.

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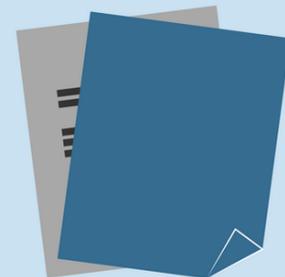
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