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Opinion: Workplace laws have significant implications in Connecticut. What to know.



The law also makes an important change for the construction industry. For certain construction contracts entered into on or after January 1, 2027, general contractors can be held jointly responsible for wages that subcontractors fail to pay their workers. (File photo)

By **STEVEN M. FREDERICK**

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There are a host of new workplace laws covering hiring, pay, employee breaks, construction wages, service workers, and other employment issues. Employers may need to review job postings, employee handbooks, payroll procedures, contracts, and other documents as the new rules take effect. Job postings, for example, now require more pay information.

Now, employers generally must include the wage or wage range for a position in both public and internal job postings as well as a general description of the benefits offered with the job. The wage range must be set by the employer in good faith. A review of job posting templates now will help ensure that managers, human resources staff, and outside recruiters use the correct information. Employers should note that Connecticut law bars employers from asking applicants about their wage and salary history (although an applicant, without coercion, can voluntarily provide it), so employers will have to determine appropriate wage rates without obtaining this information from applicants.

Employers with 100 or more employees now have another requirement. Covered employers must create a guide explaining certain codes used for overtime and other types of extra pay. The guide must be posted in English, Spanish and other languages that are spoken by employees. The guide may cover items such as shift pay, on-call pay, hazard pay, callback pay, holiday pay, or other pay differences. It should also tell employees whom to contact with questions or concerns about their hours or wages. It is important that these guides match the codes on employees' pay records.

Connecticut law already protects employees who need to breastfeed or express breast milk while at work. Now, employers must provide reasonable break time for an employee to breastfeed at work or express milk for a nursing child — time in addition to the employee's regularly scheduled breaks. Supervisors and employees need to understand the new rule and managers need to understand that these requests cannot be treated as an attendance or performance problem.

Connecticut law also limits certain agreements that require workers to repay an employer if they leave their job before being employed for a specified period. Employers sometimes use these agreements, which are akin to promissory notes, when they pay for training or other employment costs. Previously, this restriction applied to larger employers with at least 26 employees. The new law expands the rule to employers of all sizes. Small businesses that use training repayment agreements,

promissory notes, or similar contracts should have those documents reviewed. A form that worked in the past may no longer comply with Connecticut law.

The law also makes an important change for the construction industry. For certain construction contracts entered into on or after January 1, 2027, general contractors can be held jointly responsible for wages that subcontractors fail to pay their workers.

That means a general contractor, after January, could face a wage claim even though it did not directly employ the worker. Contractors may want to take a closer look at the companies they hire and how those businesses handle payroll. Construction companies should also review their subcontract agreements, recordkeeping practices, and procedures for confirming that workers have been properly paid.

The new law will also protect certain employees when a service contract changes hands. The rules apply to covered locations that may include large apartment buildings, commercial centers, airports, schools, warehouses, and private colleges.

When a new company takes over a covered service contract, it generally must keep the prior contractor's covered employees for at least 90 days. Employees who perform their jobs satisfactorily during that period generally must then receive an offer of continued employment. Businesses that provide or purchase cleaning, maintenance, security, or similar services should determine whether the new requirements apply before changing contractors.

Finally, a new law, effective Oct. 1, 2026, requires employers to give written notice of ADA accommodation rights to new hires, to give notice to existing employees within 120 days (by about Jan. 29, 2027), and to give such notice to any employee who discloses a disability, within 10 days. Employers can satisfy this requirement by displaying an appropriate poster containing this information.

The new law, Public Act 26-12, contains 75 sections, and not every rule will apply to every workplace. However, the law is broad enough that most employers should review their current practices.

Human resources, payroll staff, managers, recruiters, and outside vendors may each handle a different part of these new requirements. Keeping records of policy updates, manager training, and revised forms can also help demonstrate that the company took reasonable steps to comply with the law.

Connecticut employers do not need to change every workplace policy at once. However, they do need to know which parts of the new law apply to their business.

Reviewing policies, contracts, and payroll practices may give employers time to correct problems before a problem arises. Preparing quickly may be the easiest way to avoid confusion and employment disputes later.

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