

Massachusetts Employment Law Blog

Legal news and updates for Massachusetts employers from Morse Barnes-Brown Pendleton

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
-



[Home](#) > [Wage & Hour Law - Monthly Tip](#) > Massachusetts' Minimum Wage Set to Increase

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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- [August 2017](#)
- [November 2016](#)
- [October 2016](#)
- [August 2016](#)

- [June 2016](#)
- [May 2016](#)
- [March 2016](#)
- [December 2015](#)
- [September 2015](#)
- [July 2015](#)
- [June 2015](#)
- [May 2015](#)
- [April 2015](#)
- [March 2015](#)
- [February 2015](#)
- [January 2015](#)
- [November 2014](#)
- [September 2014](#)
- [July 2014](#)
- [June 2014](#)
- [May 2014](#)
- [April 2014](#)
- [March 2014](#)
- [February 2014](#)
- [January 2014](#)
- [December 2013](#)
- [November 2013](#)
- [October 2013](#)
- [September 2013](#)
- [August 2013](#)
- [July 2013](#)
- [June 2013](#)
- [May 2013](#)
- [April 2013](#)
- [March 2013](#)
- [February 2013](#)
- [January 2013](#)
- [December 2012](#)
- [November 2012](#)
- [October 2012](#)
- [September 2012](#)
- [August 2012](#)
- [July 2012](#)
- [June 2012](#)

[Top](#)

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