

2026 WASHINGTON D.C. LABOR LAWS



This poster must be in a conspicuous place accessible to all employees.

This poster does not provide any legal advice and is distributed independently by each Journey Location. Poster up to date as of March 1, 2026



Minimum Wage:
\$18.40
Tipped Minimum Wage:
\$10.30

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Department of Employment Services



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

DR. UNIQUE MORRIS-HUGHES
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OFFICE OF WAGE AND HOUR PUBLIC NOTICE District of Columbia Minimum Wage Increase

Beginning July 1, 2026, the minimum wage in the District of Columbia will increase from \$17.95 per hour to \$18.40 per hour for all workers, regardless of size of employer. Mayor Muriel Bowser signed the “Fair Shot Minimum Wage Amendment Act of 2016 into law on June 27, 2016, after unanimous passage by the D.C. Council. The law also includes provisions to further increase the minimum wage in subsequent years.

The minimum wage will progressively increase each successive year in proportion to the increase in the Consumer Price Index. In 2025, the Consumer Price Index Increased by 2.4% within the Washington Metropolitan Area.

As of July 1, 2026, the base minimum wage for tipped employees will increase from \$10.00 per hour to \$10.30. However, if an employee’s hourly tip earnings (averaged weekly) added to the base minimum wage do not equal the District’s full minimum wage, the employer must pay the difference. For employees who receive gratuities, the minimum wage will progressively increase during each successive year pursuant to the Consumer Price Index.

DOES provides new D.C. Minimum Wage Posters for all District employers. Every employer subject to the provisions of the Act must post the D.C. Minimum Wage Poster in or about the premises at which any employee covered is employed.

NOTE: Posters are available by accessing: 2026 Minimum Wage Poster

Please direct all inquiries to: owh.ask@dc.gov.

Office of Wage Hour
202-671-1880
400 Virginia Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024



NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES Information on Paid Family Leave in the District of Columbia

Your employer is subject to the District of Columbia’s Paid Family Leave law, which provides covered employees paid time off from work for qualifying parental, family, medical, and prenatal events. For more information about the Paid Family Leave program, please visit the Office of Paid Family Leave’s website at dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov.

Covered Workers

To receive benefits under the Paid Family Leave program, you must work for a covered employer in DC. To find out if you are a covered worker, you can ask your employer or contact the Office of Paid Family Leave using the contact information below. Your employer is required to tell you if you are covered by the Paid Family Leave program. Additionally, your employer is required to provide you information about the Paid Family Leave program at these three (3) times:

1. At the time you were hired;
2. At least once a year; and
3. If you ask your employer for leave that could qualify for benefits under the Paid Family Leave program.

Covered Events

There are four (4) kinds of Paid Family Leave benefits:

1. Parental leave - receive benefits to bond with a new child for up to 12 weeks in a year;
2. Family leave - receive benefits to care for a family member for up to 12 weeks in a year;
3. Medical leave - receive benefits for your own serious health condition for up to 12 weeks in a year; and
4. Prenatal leave - receive benefits for prenatal medical care for up to 2 weeks in a year.

Maximum Leave Entitlement

Each kind of leave has its own eligibility rules and its own limit on the length of time you can receive benefits in a year. The maximum amount of leave for any combination of parental, family, and medical leave is 12 weeks. However, there is an exception for pregnant women who take prenatal leave. Pregnant women are eligible for 2 weeks of prenatal leave while pregnant and 12 weeks of parental leave after giving birth, for a maximum of 14 weeks.

Applying for Benefits

If you have experienced an event that may qualify for benefits, be sure to apply no more than 30 days after your event. You can learn more about applying for benefits with the Office of Paid Family Leave at dcpaidfamilyleave.dc.gov.

Benefit Amounts

Paid Family Leave benefits are based on the wages your employer paid to you and reported to the Department of Employment Services. If you believe your wages were reported incorrectly, you have the right to provide proof of your correct wages. The current maximum weekly benefit amount is \$1,190.

Employee Protection

The Office of Paid Family Leave does not administer any job protections for District workers who take leave from work. However, some job protections may be available under laws and regulations administered by the District’s Office of Human Rights (OHR).

Under the Universal Paid Leave Act, the Office of Paid Family Leave is required to provide notice of the following:

1. That retaliation by a covered employer against a covered employee for requesting, applying for, or using paid-leave benefits is prohibited;
2. That an employee who works for a covered employer with under 20 employees shall not be entitled to job protection if he or she decides to take paid leave pursuant to this act; and
3. That employees have a right to file a complaint with OHR if they feel they have been retaliated against for requesting, applying for, or using paid leave.

For more information on OHR and job protections, please visit the following web address: ohr.dc.gov.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Workplace Poster Updated: May 17, 2024



Know Your Rights in the District of Columbia

DC Human Right Act

In accordance with the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, the District of Columbia and employers cannot discriminate on the basis of (actual or perceived):¹

- Race
- Color
- Sex (including pregnancy)
- National Origin
- Religion
- Age
- Marital Status
- Personal Appearance
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity and Expression
- Family Responsibilities
- Matriculation
- Political Affiliation
- Genetic Information
- Disability
- Credit Information
- Status as a victim or family member of a victim of Domestic Violence, Sexual Offense or Stalking (DVSOS)
- Homeless Status

Sexual harassment and harassment based on other protected categories is prohibited by the Act.

If you believe a violation of the Act has occurred, you can file a complaint with the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights. The process is free and does not require an attorney. Damages can be awarded if it is determined that a violation of the Act did occur.

DC Family Medical Leave Act

The DC Family and Medical Leave Act of 1990 requires all employers with 20 or more employees to provide up to 16 weeks of unpaid family leave:

- for the birth of a child, an adoption or foster care; or
- to care for a seriously ill family member.

It also allows up to 16 weeks of unpaid medical leave:

- to recover from a serious illness that left the employee unable to work for a total of 32 weeks during a 24 month period.

During the period of leave, an employee should not lose benefits such as seniority or group health plan coverage. The employer may require medical certification and reasonable prior notice when applicable.

¹ Additional categories protected from discrimination but not in the area of employment include: familial status, source of income, place of residence or business, sealed eviction record, and status as a victim of an intrafamily offense.

An employee is eligible under the Act if they have been employed by the employer for at least 12 consecutive or non-consecutive months in the seven years immediately preceding the start of the family or medical leave, and worked at least 1,000 hours during these 12 months.

DC Parental Leave Act

In accordance with the DC Parental Leave Act of 1994, an employee who is a parent shall be entitled to a total of 24 hours leave² during any 12-month period to attend or participate in school-related events for his or her child.

A parent is defined as the:

- biological mother or father of a child;
- person who has legal custody of a child;
- person who acts as a guardian of a child;
- aunt, uncle, or grandparent of a child; or is
- a person married to a person listed above.

A school-related event means an activity sponsored either by a school or an associated organization.

Any employee shall notify the employer of the desire to leave at least 10 calendar days prior to the event, unless the need to attend the school-related event cannot be reasonably foreseen.

Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you family or medical leave, or retaliated against you under this statute, you can file a complaint within one year of the incident with the Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit:

- Online at ohr.dc.gov; or
- In-Person at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559

² Leave is unpaid unless the parent elects to use any paid family, vacation, personal or compensatory leave provided by the employer.



NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

Information on Unemployment Compensation in the District of Columbia

Your employer is subject to the District of Columbia Unemployment Compensation Act which establishes a system of protecting insured workers from complete wage loss when they become unemployed through no fault of their own and are seeking new jobs. To help finance the unemployment insurance system, a tax is levied against employers-- not workers. No deductions are made from your pay for this purpose. This program is administered by the District of Columbia's Department of Employment Services.

If you should become unemployed or your hours are reduced, you may be entitled to receive unemployment compensation benefits. To apply for benefits, please call and make an appointment to visit one of the American Job Centers listed below.

American Job Center – Headquarters 4058 Minnesota Avenue, N.E. Washington, DC 20019 (202) 724-2337	American Job Center – Northeast CDC - Bertie Backus Campus 5171 South Dakota Avenue, N.E., 2nd Floor Washington, DC 20017 (202) 576-3092
American Job Center – Northwest Frank D. Reeves Municipal Center 2000 14th Street, N.W., 3rd Floor Washington, DC 20009 (202) 442-4577	American Job Center – Southeast 3720 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, S.E. Washington, DC 20032 (202) 741-7747
American Job Centers Hours of Operation: Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	

You may also apply for benefits through the Internet at www.dcnetworks.org.

IMPORTANT: Employers must display this Notice To Employees prominently on the work premises. Additional copies may be furnished upon request by calling (202) 698-7550.

Rev. 02.01.2015



Parental Leave Act Workplace Poster Updated: May 17, 2024



Know Your Rights in the District of Columbia

Work Leave for Parenting Purpose

The District of Columbia Parental Leave Act allows employees who are parents or guardians to take 24 hours of leave (paid or unpaid) during a 12-month period to attend school-related activities. School events include but are not limited to: parent-teacher conferences, concerts, plays, rehearsals, sporting events, and other activities where the child is a participant or the subject of the event, not a spectator.

The employee must notify the employer 10 days before the requested leave unless the school-related activity was not reasonably foreseeable (e.g., the child’s teacher has requested an emergency parent-teacher conference). The leave can be unpaid or paid family, vacation, personal, compensatory or leave bank leave.

The employer may deny the leave if granting the leave would disrupt the employer’s business and make the achievement of production or service unusually difficult.

Definition of Parent or Guardian

An employee is considered a parent or guardian for purposes of this Act if he, she or they is:

- biological mother or father of a child;
- person who has legal custody of a child;
- person who acts as a guardian of a child;
- aunt, uncle, or grandparent of a child; or is
- a person married or in a domestic partnership to a person listed above.

Employer Posting Requirements

The employer must post and maintain this notice in a conspicuous place. An employer that willfully fails to post this notice may be ordered to pay a fine of up to \$100 for each day the employer fails to post the notice.

This document is a factsheet and guidance provided by the D.C. Office of Human Rights (OHR) regarding legislative changes made to the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977 (DCHRA) and the Office of Human Rights Establishment Act of 1999 (HREA). This document may be used for educational purposes only and not as legal advice to apply to a particular situation. Any person or entity in need of legal advice should consult an attorney.

Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you parental leave under this statute, you can file a complaint within one year of the incident with the Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit: Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559

- Online at ohr.dc.gov; or
- In-Person at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559

Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Workplace Poster Updated: October 30, 2024



Know Your Rights in the District of Columbia

Accommodations for Pregnancy, Childbirth and Chest/Breastfeeding

The Protecting Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PPWF) requires District of Columbia employers to provide reasonable workplace accommodations for employees whose ability to perform job duties is limited because of pregnancy, childbirth, chest/breastfeeding, or a related medical condition.

The employer must engage in good faith and in a timely and interactive process to determine the accommodations.

Types of Accommodations

Employers must make all reasonable accommodations,¹ including by not limited to:

- More frequent or longer breaks;
- Time off to recover from childbirth;
- Temporarily transferring the employee to a less strenuous or hazardous position;
- Purchasing or modifying work equipment, such as chairs;
- Temporarily restructuring the employee’s position to provide light duty or a modified work schedule;
- Having the employee refrain from heavy lifting;
- Relocating the employee’s work area; or
- Providing private (non-bathroom) space for expressing breast/chest milk.

Prohibited Actions by Employers

Employers may not:

- Refuse an accommodation unless it would cause significant hardship or expense to the business;
- Take adverse action against an employee for requesting an accommodation;
- Deny employment opportunities to the employee because of the request or need for an accommodation;
- Require an employee to take leave if a reasonable accommodation can be provided; or
- Require employees to accept an accommodation unless it’s necessary for the employee to perform her job duties.

Certification from Health Care Provider

The employer may require an employee to provide certification from a health care provider indicating a reasonable accommodation is advisable. The certification must include:

1. The date the accommodation became or will become medically advisable;
2. An explanation of the medical condition and need for a reasonable accommodation; and
3. The probable length of time the accommodation should be provided.

Filing a Complaint of a Violation

If you believe an employer has wrongfully denied you a reasonable accommodation or has discriminated against you because of your pregnancy, childbirth, need to chest/breastfeed or a related medical condition, you can file a complaint within one year with the DC Office of Human Rights (OHR). To file a complaint, visit: OHR will perform the initial mediation and investigation. If probable cause exists, administrative law judges at the Commission on Human Rights will make a final determination.

- Online at ohr.dc.gov; or
- In-Person at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N, Washington, DC 20001.

Questions about the OHR process can also be answered by phone at (202) 727-4559

¹ A “reasonable accommodation” is one that does not require significant difficulty in the operation of the employer’s business or significant expense for the employer, with consideration to factors such as the size of the business, its financial resources and the nature and structure of the business.

NOTICE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Labor Standards Bureau

Office of Wage-Hour

The Wage Theft Prevention Amendment Act of 2014

The Wage Theft Prevention Amendment Act of 2014 (WTPAA) has an effective date of February 26, 2015. The law includes provisions to enhance applicable remedies, fines, and administrative penalties when an employer fails to pay earned wages, to provide for suspension of business licenses of employers that are delinquent in paying wage judgments or agreements, to clarify administrative procedures and legal standards for adjudicating wage disputes, to require the employer to provide written notice to each employee of the terms of their employment, and to maintain appropriate employment records.

Requirements

Written Employment Notice:

As an employer of the District of Columbia, upon hire, you are required to provide a notice to employees of their employment. Also, within 90 days of the effective date of WTPAA, every employer shall furnish each employee with an updated written notice containing the information required. As proof of compliance, every employer shall retain copies of the written notice furnished to employees that are signed and dated by the employer and by the employee acknowledging receipt of the notice. (There are additional requirements for temporary staffing firms.)

This notice must include:

- 1) The name of the employer and any “doing business as” (DBA) names used by the employer
- 2) The physical address of the employer’s main office or principal place of business, and a mailing address if different
- 3) The telephone number of the employer
- 4) The employee’s rate of pay and the basis of that rate, including:
 - a. Rate by the hour, shift, day, or week (whichever is applicable)
 - b. Salary, Piece Rate, or commission (whichever is applicable)
 - c. Any allowances claimed as part of the minimum wage, including tip, meal, or lodging allowances
 - d. Overtime rate of pay or exemptions from overtime pay
 - e. Living wage or exemptions from the living wage
 - f. Any applicable prevailing wages
- 5) The employee’s regular payday designated by the employer

The Mayor shall make available for employers a sample template of the notice within 60 days of the effective date of the Wage Theft Prevention Amendment Act of 2014. (Immediate Notice to new employees is required regardless of the template release date.)

Wage Payment Liability:

- When the employer is a subcontractor and has failed to pay an employee any wages earned, the subcontractor and the general contractor shall be jointly and severally liable to the subcontractor’s employees for violations of this Act, the Living Wage Act, and the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act.
- When a temporary staffing firm employs an employee who performs work on behalf of or to the benefit of another employer pursuant to a temporary staffing arrangement or contract for services, both the temporary staffing firm and the employer shall be jointly and severally liable for violations of this Act, the Living Wage Act, and the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act to the employee and to the District.
- Every employer shall pay wages earned to his employees on regular paydays designated in advance by the employer and at least twice during each calendar month.

Notice of Complaint

For any employer alleged to be in non-compliance with the Act, The Mayor shall deliver two (2) notices to the employer.

1. Notice of Complaint that specifies:
 - a. The alleged violation
 - b. Potential damages, penalties, and other cost
 - c. Rights and obligations of the parties
 - d. Process for contesting the complaint
2. Notice of Investigation that must be posted for all employees to see for a period of at least 30 days that specifies:
 - a. An investigation is being conducted
 - b. Information for employees on how they may participate

Rules against Retaliation

The WTPAA extends the protection and it also gives the Mayor power to enforce this law.

- Threats are now included as a form of retaliation.
- It is illegal for any person to retaliate.
- This law protects employees even if their employer incorrectly believes they made a complaint.

Procedural Options

- Wage-Hour Investigation
- Administrative Law Judge Hearing

- Civil Court Proceedings

Potential Penalties

Wage Payment Penalties, D.C. Official Code § 32-1307; D.C. Official Code § 32-1307(a) Section 7a – Wage Theft Prevention Fund

- Any employer who negligently fails to comply with the provisions of this Act or the Living Wage Act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined:
 - For the first offense, an amount per affected employee of not more than \$2,500;
 - for any subsequent offense, an amount per affected employee of not more than \$5,000.
- Any employer who willfully fails to comply with the provisions of this Act or the Living Wage Act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined:
 - For the first offense, an amount not more than \$5,000 or imprisoned not more than 30 days, or both; for any subsequent offense, an amount not more than \$10,000, or imprisoned not more than 90 days, or both.

In addition to and apart from any other penalties or remedies provided for in this Act or the Living Wage Act, the Mayor shall assess and collect administrative penalties as follows:

- For the first offense, \$50 for each employee or person whose rights under this Act or the Living Wage Act are violated for each day the violation occurred or continued.
- For any subsequent offense, \$100 for each employee or person whose rights under this Act or the Living Wage Act are violated for each day the violation occurred or continued.

The Mayor shall collect administrative penalties in the amounts set forth below for the following violations:

- Five hundred dollars for failure to provide notice of investigation to employees
- Five hundred dollars for failure to post notice of violations to the public

Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act or the Minimum Wage Revision Act.

- No administrative penalty may be collected unless the Mayor has provided any person alleged to have violated any of the provisions of this section notification of the violation, notification of the amount of the administrative penalty to be imposed, and an opportunity to request a formal hearing held pursuant to the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act, approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat 1203, D.C. Official Code § 2-501 et seq).
- The Mayor shall issue a final order following the hearing, containing a finding that a violation has or has not occurred. If a hearing is not requested, the person to whom notification of violation was provided shall transmit to the Mayor the amount of the penalty within 15 days following notification.

There is established as a special fund the Wage Theft Prevention Fund (“Fund”), which shall be administered by the Department of Employment Services. The Fund shall be used to enforce the provisions of this Act, the Minimum Wage Revision Act, the Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act, and the Living Wage Act. The money deposited into the Fund, and interest earned, shall not revert to the

unrestricted fund balance of the General Fund of the District of Columbia at the end of a fiscal year, or at any other time.

Minimum Wage Penalties D.C. Official Code § 32-1011

- Any person who willfully or negligently violates any of the provisions of §32-1010 shall, upon conviction, be subject to a fine of not more than \$10,000, or to imprisonment of not more than six (6) months, or both.
- No person shall be imprisoned under this section except for an offense committed willfully after the conviction of that person for a prior offense under this section.
- Prosecutions for violations of this subchapter shall be in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and shall be conducted by the Attorney General of the District of Columbia.
- In addition to and apart from the penalties or remedies provided for in this section, the Mayor shall assess and collect administrative penalties as follows:

1. For the first violation, \$50 for each employee or person whose rights under this Act are violated for each day that the violation occurred or continued;
2. For any subsequent violations, \$100 for each employee or person whose rights under this Act are violated for each day that the violation occurred or continued;
3. \$500 for each failure to maintain payroll records or to retain payroll records for three (3) years or whatever the prevailing federal standard is, whichever is greater for each violation;
4. \$500 for each failure to allow the Mayor to inspect payroll records or perform any other investigation.
5. \$500 for each failure to provide each employee an itemized wage statement or the written notice as required by section 9(b) and (c); and
6. \$100 for each day that the employer fails to post notice as required under section 10(a).

ASSLA Penalties D.C. Official Code § 32-131.12

An employer who willfully violates the requirements of this Act shall be subject to a civil penalty for each affected employee of \$1,000 for the 1st offense, \$1,500 for the 2nd offense, and \$2,000 for the 3rd and each subsequent offense. If the Mayor determines that an employer has violated any provision of this Act, the Mayor shall order the employer to provide affirmative remedies including: compensatory damages, punitive damages, and additional damages as provided in the law. The administrative fines and penalties collected under this section shall be deposited in the Wage Theft Prevention Fund.

For the complete text of the Wage Theft Prevention Amendment Act of 2014, go to <http://lms.dccouncil.us/Download/31203/B20-0671-SignedAct.pdf>.