

ALERTS

New California Employment Laws Take Effect On July 1, 2014 – Increased Minimum Wage, Expanded Paid Family Leave And Further Limits On Background Checks

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California employers should be prepared to comply with several new laws that take effect on July 1, 2014.

Increased Minimum Wage

The minimum wage will increase from \$8.00 to \$9.00 per hour. This is the first of two increases to California's minimum wage under Assembly Bill 10, and is the first increase to the minimum wage since January 1, 2008. The second increase, which will not take effect until January 1, 2016, will raise the minimum wage from \$9.00 to \$10.00 per hour.

Expanded Paid Family Leave

The list of family members for whose care employees are eligible to receive Paid Family Leave (PFL) wage-replacement benefits will be expanded under Senate Bill 770 to include a seriously ill grandparent, grandchild, sibling or parent-in-law. The list of family members under current law included a seriously ill child, parent, spouse, domestic partner. In addition to providing benefits during time off to care for seriously ill family member, PFL also applies to time off taken to bond with a new child.

A component of California's State Disability Insurance program, PFL does not create the right to a leave of absence but rather provides employees with some wage replacement during a qualifying leave.

Further Limits on Background Checks

A state or local agency employer will be prohibited, under Assembly Bill 218, from asking an applicant to disclose information regarding a criminal conviction until after the agency has first determined that the applicant meets minimum employment qualifications. A new section to this effect, section 432.9, will be added to the California Labor Code. Certain exceptions apply, such as when a criminal background check is required by law for a given state or local agency position.

Barnes & Thornburg's Labor and Employment attorneys are available to assist employers with these and other issues involving employees in California. To obtain more information, please contact the Barnes & Thornburg Labor and Employment attorney with whom you work, or a leader of the firm's Labor and Employment Law Department in the

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