

New Year, New Laws: Laws that Take Effect on January 1, 2015

January 1 is a common start date for new laws, and 2015 is no different. Here's a sample of the new laws and regulations that take effect on January 1, 2015 at the state and federal level.

A Sample of State-specific Legislation

In **California**, 930 new laws will go into effect in 2015, many starting on January 1. The *San Francisco Chronicle* [has the highlights](#):

- A new provision allowing drivers licenses for undocumented immigrants.
- "Revenge porn" protections extended to "selfies"
- "Kill switch" requirements for cell phones sold in California after July 1.
- Tougher penalties for sexual assault and longer statutes of limitation on reporting of childhood abuse.
- Paid sick leave for retail, fast food and other service-industry employees.

In **Illinois**, [over 200 new laws](#) will take effect in 2015 ([more](#) from the *Daily Herald*), including:

- "Ban the Box" prohibiting questions about criminal history on an initial job application. [According to Forbes](#), similar restrictions are in place in Massachusetts, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Baltimore, Newark and Buffalo.
- Adding the gray wolf, American black bear and cougar to the list of protected species in Illinois.
- [Prohibiting "ticket quotas"](#) for law enforcement officers.
- Requiring law enforcement agencies to provide bulletproof vests for officers.

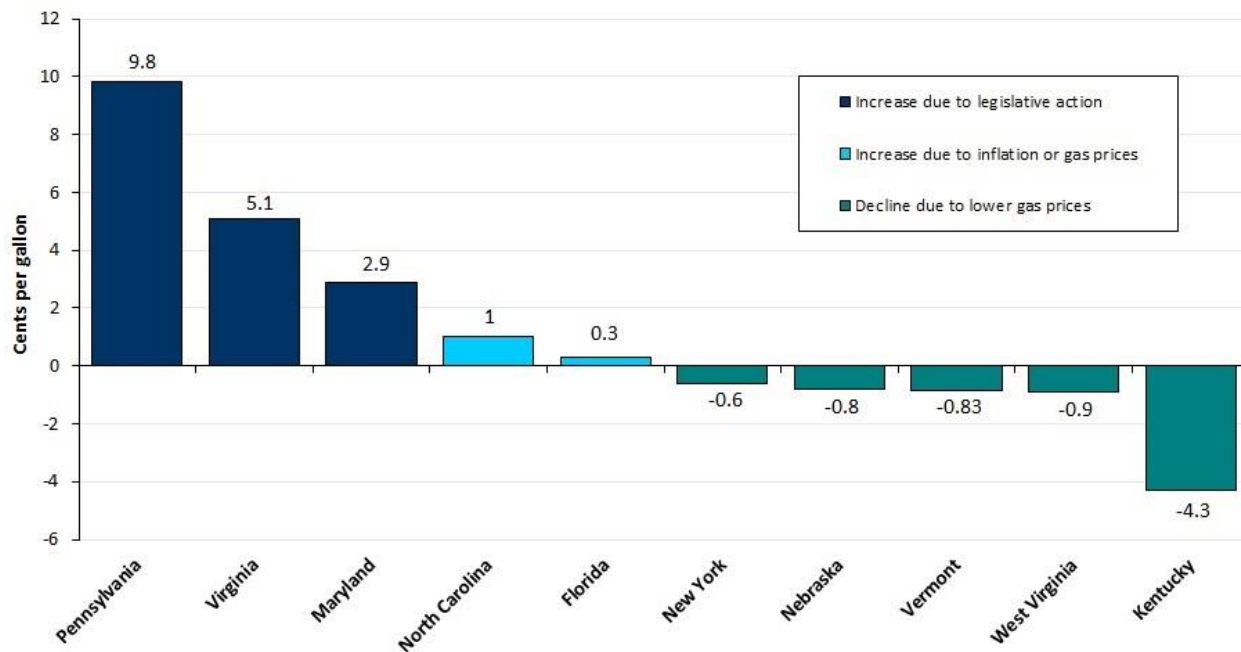
From the [Albany Business Journal](#), new laws in **New York** include:

- A prohibition on "e-waste" disposal in normal trash or recycling.
- Tax credits for hiring veterans or persons with developmental disabilities.

Gas Tax Changes in 10 States

Five states will see gas tax rates *increase*: Pennsylvania (9.8), Virginia (5.1), Maryland (2.9), North Carolina (1.0), and Florida (0.3). Gas tax rates will *decrease* due to declining gas prices in Kentucky (-4.3), West Virginia (-0.9), Vermont (-0.83), Nebraska (-0.8), and New York (-0.6). (Source: [Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy](#).)

Gasoline Tax Changes Taking Effect January 1, 2015



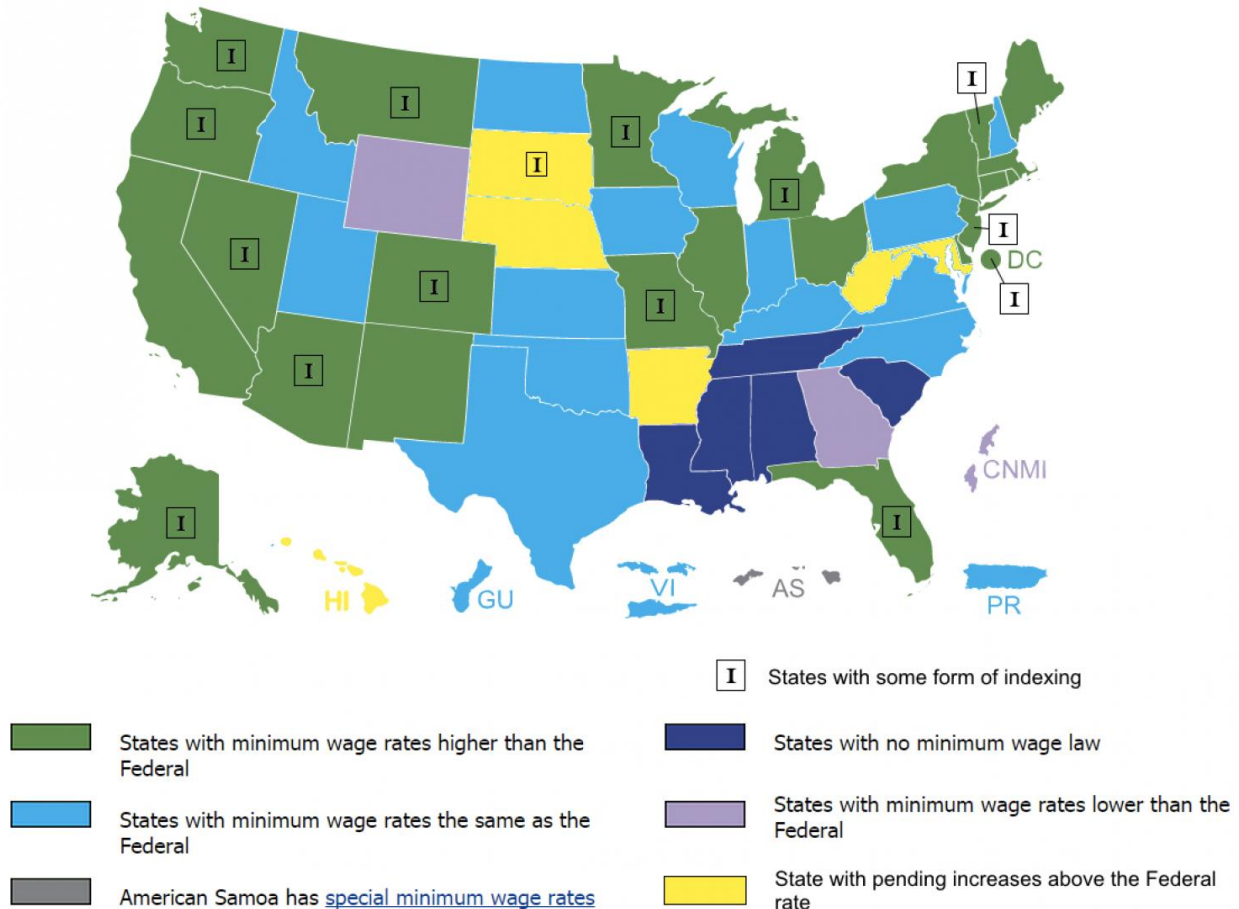
New Privacy Laws

Delaware and California have enacted new privacy laws that may have far reaching effects. According to the [National Law Review](#), these include:

- Enhanced security and breach notification requirements
- Prohibition on the sale of social security numbers
- Restrictions on marketing certain products to minors, including alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tanning beds, firearms, tattoos, obscene material, lottery tickets
- A new minor "Eraser Law" allowing minors to request deletion of publicly posted content
- Updates to the California Invasion of Privacy law
- New Delaware requirements for destruction of personally identifiable data when records no longer retained.

Minimum Wage Increases in 20 States and for Federal Contractors

Minimum Wage Laws in the States, as of Jan 1, 2015

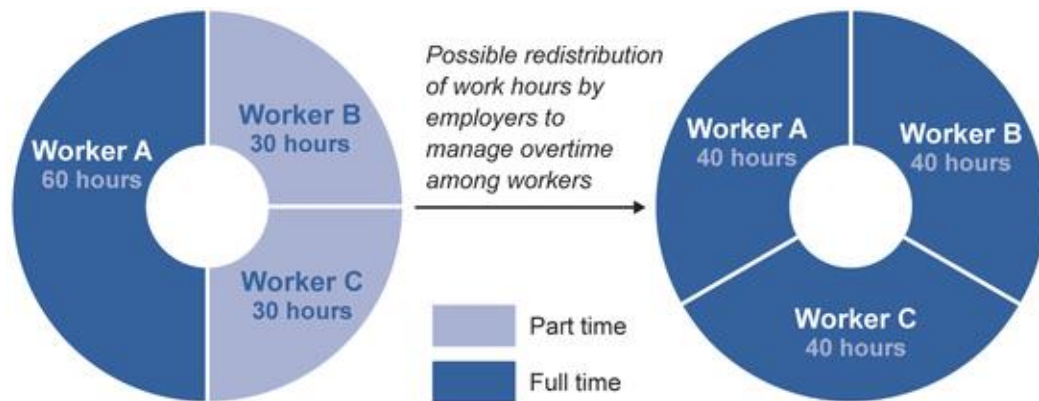


Twenty states will increase their minimum wage, reports the [Washington Post](#) (see the [complete chart](#) from the National Conference of State Legislatures.) According to the NCSL, "As of Jan. 1, 2015, 29 states and D.C. will have minimum wages above the [federal minimum wage](#)."

A state-by-state list of wage and employment law changes for 2015 is available from the [Society for Human Resources Management](#).

New minimum wage requirements for federal contractors also go into effect for contracts formed after January 1, 2015, as directed by Executive Order 13658. The new rate is \$10.10 for hourly workers and \$4.90 for certain tipped workers. (Source: [GSA](#))

NOT Taking Effect: Minimum Wage for home health workers



Source: GAO analysis of interviews with national stakeholders. | GAO-15-12

Ten days before they were to take effect, new regulations requiring minimum wage and overtime for most home health workers were struck down by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. According to [Bloomberg BNA](#), "The Labor Department originally proposed the rule in December 2011, a move that generated more than 26,000 public comments from industry groups, labor organizations and other stakeholders."

1% Pay Raise for Federal Employees

Federal employees will receive a 1% pay raise in 2015, as a result of [Executive Order 13686](#), signed by President Obama on December 19, 2014. This is the first federal pay raise since 2010. According to [Government Executive](#), "the order also implements a 1 percent pay raise for uniformed military service members," which was included in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, signed by the President on December 19.

The [Washington Post](#) [notes](#), however, that the raise does not apply to Congress. Political appointees are also not included due to language in the 2015 "Cromnibus" appropriations bill freezing pay rates of "the Vice President and certain senior political appointees." Also, "The president's salary is \$400,000 and can be neither increased nor decreased during an incumbent's term."

New OSHA Reporting Requirements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued new record keeping and reporting [requirements](#) for work-related injuries, which take effect on January 1. As explained by [Manufacturing.net](#), the new rule "will require employers to notify OSHA when an employee is killed within eight hours of the incident, and to report any work-related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye within 24 hours. In the past, OSHA only required an employer to

report work-related deaths and hospitalizations of three or more employees. Single hospitalizations, amputations or loss of an eye did not need to be reported."

Affordable Care Act Implementation

Employer mandate: After a [one-year delay](#) in implementation, on January 1, the ACA "Pay-or-play" requirements go into effect for employers with 100 or more full-time employees (average 30 hours per week). Employers that do not offer health insurance that meets the minimum requirements may be subject to an assessment (read more from the [Small Business Administration](#) and the [Internal Revenue Service](#)). According [to the SBA](#), "Employers with at least 50 but fewer than 100 full-time or full-time equivalent employees will generally have an additional year, until 2016, before these rules apply."

Value-based payments for doctors: The Affordable Care Act [requires](#) that Medicare include cost and quality data in calculating payments for physicians. This [will start](#) in 2015 with a "Value-based Payment Modifier" for physicians in group practices of 100 or more (with practices of 10 or more following in 2016 and all Medicare physicians in 2017.)