



## LAW UPDATE LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

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### UP, UP AND AWAY!

California minimum wage is currently \$15 an hour for public school employers. Districts have struggled primarily with the classified bargaining groups which have asserted that minimum wage has uprooted the “integrity” of the classified salary schedules. Districts have to compete with local employers who often pay above minimum wage for what were normally considered minimum wage positions.

After the last round of negotiations, most districts had successfully navigated the minimum wage increases. Unfortunately, an increase to minimum wage (to \$15.50) will be required for all employers effective January 1, 2023. California law requires the state minimum wage must increase to \$15.50 per hour for everyone in 2023 if inflation increases by more than 7 percent between the 2021 and 2022 fiscal years. Recently, the California Department of Finance said it projects inflation for the 2022 fiscal year to be 7.6 percent, triggering the minimum wage increase. Governor Newsom subsequently announced that all California employers will be required, regardless of size, to pay a new minimum wage of \$15.50 per hour, effective January 1, 2023.

This minimum wage increase will also increase the minimum salary for most exempt employees in California effective January 1, 2023. And there is more! Supporters of California’s ballot initiative to raise California’s minimum wage to \$18 per hour announced having submitted more than one million signatures, enough to land it on the November ballot. If this ballot measure passes, the minimum wage in California will go to \$16 per hour on January 1, 2023, and move up by \$1 an hour for all hourly employees annually, until reaching \$18 an hour on January 1, 2025.

As you prepare for upcoming negotiations, keep in mind that the increased minimum wage will be at least \$15.50 per hour effective January 1, 2023.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

- Timothy L. Salazar

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