

## The New Missouri Minimum Wage: What Employers Need to Know by January 1

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Missouri voters have been heard: the state's minimum wage is on the rise. On November 6, 2018, Missouri voters approved Proposition B, a measure that proposed an increase to the current state minimum wage of \$7.85 per hour. The minimum wage will now rise each year until it reaches \$12.00 per hour.

Under the measure, the first increase, to \$8.60 per hour, will take effect on January 1, 2019. Future incremental increases are scheduled as follows:

Hourly Minimum Wage	Effective Date
\$9.45 per hour	January 1, 2020
\$10.30 per hour	January 1, 2021
\$11.15 per hour	January 1, 2022
\$12.00 per hour	January 1, 2023

Starting on January 1, 2024, the minimum wage may increase or decrease each year depending on cost-of-living changes reflected in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

The new Missouri law also provides the following:

- An employer that pays an employee less than the minimum wage may be liable to the employee for the full amount of the wage rate, plus twice the unpaid wages (less any amount actually paid to the employee), and for costs and attorneys' fees associated with an action to collect a deficiency in wages.
- An employee now has three years from the accrual of a cause of action to bring an action for wage deficiency.
- Government employers are exempt from the new yearly minimum wage increases.

Upon voter approval, Proposition B amended Sections 290.502 and 290.527 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and created Section 290.529. The new law does not impact [Missouri House Bill 1194](#), effective since 2017, which continues to prohibit municipalities from increasing their local minimum wage rates.

Missouri employers may want to review their existing wage schedules to identify any employees earning less than the \$8.60 hourly minimum wage that will take effect on January 1, 2019.

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