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Illinois' Minimum Wage Will Likely Rise To \$15 Per Hour

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Illinois is close to enacting legislation that would nearly double its minimum wage. Currently, the Illinois Minimum Wage Law guarantees covered employees a minimum hourly wage of \$8.25. However, on Feb. 14, 2019, the [Illinois House of Representatives approved a bill](#) that would significantly raise this minimum wage to \$15 statewide.

The Illinois Senate has already passed the bill. Although former Governor Bruce Rauner vetoed a similar bill in 2017, current Governor J.B. Pritzker has already issued a statement that he will sign this bill into law.

The \$15 minimum wage will not go into effect immediately. Instead, it will increase gradually every year until it reaches \$15 in 2025. The first increase is expected to be a \$1 increase to \$9.25 effective Jan. 1, 2020.

According to a 2017 report by the National Employment Law Project, [41 percent of all workers in Illinois](#) currently earn less than \$15 per hour. As such, the minimum wage increase will have far-reaching consequences for employers and employees alike.

Advocates for the bill argue that it will lift thousands of Illinois employees out of poverty. Opponents conversely argue that the increased minimum wage will strain employers' budgets and result in job reductions by employers who are unwilling or unable to pay the higher wages.

Illinois employers of minimum wage employees would be wise to budget for higher costs in the future and evaluate their needs for unskilled laborers in light of these increased costs.

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