



# FOCUS

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1st Quarter 2016



*Thank you for trusting Human Capital to be your source for all your Human Resources needs.  
We look forward to working with you in 2016 and wish you a  
happy and prosperous New year!*



## State Minimum Wage Changes

**Effective December 31, 2015**

**New York:** \$9.00 per hour (\$9.75 for fast food workers in fast food restaurants). **West Virginia:** \$8.75 per hour.

**Effective January 1, 2016**

**Alaska:** \$9.75 per hour.

**Arkansas:** \$8.00 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$8.50 per hour on January 1, 2017.

**California:** \$10.00 per hour.

**Colorado:** \$8.31 per hour.

**Connecticut:** \$9.60 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$10.10 per hour on January 1, 2017.

**Hawaii:** \$8.50 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$9.25 per hour on January 1, 2017, and \$10.10 on January 1, 2018.

**Massachusetts:** \$10.00 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$11.00 per hour on January 1, 2017.

**Michigan:** \$8.50 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$8.90 per hour on January 1, 2017, and \$9.25 on January 1, 2018.

**Nebraska:** \$9.00 per hour.

**Rhode Island:** \$9.60 per hour.

**South Dakota:** \$8.55 per hour.

**Vermont:** \$9.60 per hour. The minimum wage is also scheduled to increase to \$10.00 per hour on January 1, 2017, and \$10.50 on January 1, 2018.

**State minimum wage changes effective July 1, 2016**

**Washington D.C:** \$11.50 per hour on July 1, 2016.

**Maryland:** \$8.75 per hour on July 1, 2016, \$9.25 on July 1, 2017, and \$10.10 on July 1, 2018.

## HC REMINDERS!!!

- If employees are filing exempt on their federal of state tax status, they are required to complete a new 2016 tax form. If no form is received, they will automatically be changed to Single-0 until a new form is received per the IRS.
- W2's will be post marked by February 1, 2016. Reprints will start being sent out mid February.
- Please send any address changes ASAP to fax number 248-281-5102 to ensure W2's are sent to the correct address.

## Keeping your workers safe during winter weather




If your employees have to work outdoors, make sure they're aware of cold-weather hazards, like frostbite and hypothermia. Frostbite symptoms include a loss of feeling and a wax-white or pale appearance in the fingers, toes, nose, or earlobes. Signs of hypothermia include uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, stumbling and exhaustion.

To prevent these dangerous conditions workers should wear layers, including a water-resistant outer layer, hat, and gloves. Encourage them to take frequent, short breaks in a warm, dry shelter, drink warm, sweet (noncaffeinated) beverages and consume warm, high-calorie foods.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), "Winter driving can be hazardous and scary, especially in northern regions that get a lot of snow and ice." The agency recommends the three P's of safe winter driving-prepare for the trip, protect yourself, and prevent crashes.

- Preparation refers to maintaining the vehicle and having supplies on hand like jumper cables, a flashlight, sand or kitty litter, a shovel, a snow brush/ice scraper, flares, blankets, food, and water.
- Protection measures include using seatbelts and child safety seats properly, i.e., never placing a rear-facing child seat in front of an air bag and keeping kids under the age of 12 in the back seat,
- Prevent crashes by avoiding drugs and alcohol, slowing down, staying vigilant for pedestrians, avoiding fatigue and eliminating distractions, especially cell phones.



**First Quarter Bank Holidays:  
(no banking or check dates)  
January 18th and February 15th**

**March 13th Day Light Savings Time!**



### 4 Simple Ways to Make a New Hire Feel Welcome

Walking into an unfamiliar place full of people you don't know can be lonely, but it doesn't have to be. HR isn't the only staff members with the power to make the newbie feel comfortable; existing employees can do their part to make new hires feel welcome too.

Getting the team involved in the onboarding process is critical because it brings employees - new and old - closer together, and office friendships breed better work and happier employees.

Here are a few creative ways to get the team more involved:

- **Introduce new hires to the company on a Friday.** A busy Monday morning may not be the best time to take current employees away from their desks to bond with a new hire. When employees have greater freedom to talk and get to know their new co-worker, everyone can make a new employee's first day a good start.
- **Use the buddy system.** Assign each new hire a buddy or mentor to help with the transition. Buddies can be there to answer questions, give them tips and tricks for the job and provide support.
- **Create welcome traditions.** New hires should be introduced to individual team members and to the company as a whole. Encourage current team members to become excited and involved in the process of starting unique traditions to welcome new employees. An example would be to have an employee create a starter kit for the new hire. Employees fill these kits with whatever they want - there are no rules or limits on their creativity. The kits can include everything from books to coffee to nerf gun darts. No matter what the employees fill the kits with, they get excited to be part of the onboarding processes - whatever gets the team enthusiastic about the activity.
- **Give a team-led tour.** Anyone can show a new hire their desk, the closest bathroom and where the boss sits, but only the team can point out which copy machine acts up, which coffee shop has the best brew and in which conference room you should bring a sweater. Have a team or select a few employees to lead the new employee around the office. This tour can also help to break the ice, make new hires more comfortable and bring the team closer together.

### U.S. Treasury launches new retirement savings option: myRA

The U.S. Treasury Department has introduced myRA, a retirement savings account designed for individuals who don't have access to a retirement savings plan through their job. With myRA, according to the Social Security Matters blog:



- There's no cost and no fees to open and maintain an account;
- The investment will not lose money;
- U.S. Treasury backs the investment;
- Account owners choose how much to save (\$2, \$20, \$200—whatever fits their budget)
- If account owners change jobs, the account stays with them; and
- Account owners can withdraw the money they put in without tax and penalty.

There are several ways to fund a myRA account:

- **From a paycheck.** Account owners can set up automatic direct deposits with their employer(s) to their myRA.
- **From a checking or savings account.** Account owners can set up recurring or one-time contributions from their checking or savings accounts to their myRA.
- **From a federal tax refund.** At tax time, account owners can direct all or part of their federal tax return to their myRA.

Employers do not manage employee myRA accounts, contribute to them, or match employee contributions, but they may facilitate an ongoing payroll deduction from the employee's paycheck to the designated myRA account in the amount designated by the employee.

For more on myRA, go to: [www.myRA.treasury.gov](http://www.myRA.treasury.gov).

#### March is National Women's history month

Women are **50.8%** of the U.S. population

**47%** of the U.S. labor force is female

Women make up **one-third** of small-business owners in the U.S.

### There's an app for that!!



**Working outside the cubical: Cube Free:** Like Yelp for remote workers, this app will show you all of the libraries, coffee shops and cafes in your area, along with crowd sourced info about Wi-Fi strength and noise level. **Free!**



**Staying connected: Pingboard:** Stay connected to your team wherever you are with Pingboard, the employee directory used by the world's best companies. \$3.00/per ee

### DID YOU KNOW?



Chewing gum can help you concentrate. Chewing a stick temporarily raises your level of the hormone cortisol, which helps keep you engaged and alert and, in turn, allows you to think quicker, according to a study in the journal BioMed Research International.

Survey on the job search methods of 2,001 U.S. adults found the majority of Americans, 54%, have researched jobs on the internet, and as many as 45% have applied for a job online. That's more than double the number from 2005 when 26% of Americans had used the internet to look for jobs.

You should keep a glass of water at your desk. Just a 2% loss of body water can result in a drop of 10% in physical and mental performance



University of Illinois researchers found that listening to music in "all types of work" increased work output 6.3% over a control group



January 1, Texas law is allowing individuals with a concealed handgun license to openly carry a gun in a shoulder or hip holster

A California law takes effect on January 1 removing the word "alien" from the state's Labor Code. The new law deletes two sections of the Labor Code as a way of modernizing and removing negative connotations in the law.

Super Bowl 50 is February 7, 2016

