

Building an Economy That Works For All Marylanders

Some recent state policy changes increased economic security and expanded opportunity for working Marylanders.



\$15 minimum wage

The General Assembly raised the minimum wage for most workers to \$15 by 2025, overturning Gov. Hogan's veto. While this is a major victory, the law includes several weakening amendments:

- The subminimum wage for workers who rely on tips will remain \$3.63 per hour.
- The law continues to exclude farm workers, based on longstanding policies rooted in racism
- The law weakens wage protections for some young workers.
- Workers at smaller employers will have to wait until 2026 to reach \$15.
- The law does not adjust for inflation in future years, so the legislature will have to adopt additional increases in the future to ensure the minimum wage continues to increase along with living expenses.



Clean Energy Jobs Act

The Clean Energy Jobs Act sets a target for half of the state's electricity to come from renewable sources by 2030. It includes funding for clean energy apprenticeship programs and capital grants to minority, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses, along with a number of requirements that create incentives for employers to create good-quality jobs, hire locally, and work cooperatively with labor unions. The law did not include a provision racial and environmental justice advocates sought that would remove trash incineration from the state's list of top-tier renewable energy sources.



Paid Sick Days

In 2018 the legislature overrode Gov. Hogan's veto to guarantee five paid sick days per year to people who work for medium and large businesses. Businesses with 15 or fewer employees must at least offer unpaid sick leave, which offers important job protections for people who work at small businesses. There are continued proposals to further weaken protections by exempting certain types of businesses. The General Assembly is continuing to evaluate these proposals.

There are a number of other steps Maryland could take to reduce inequity and increase opportunity for Marylanders.



Ban the box. Earlier this year the General Assembly passed a bill stating that employers could not ask about a person's criminal history until an in-person interview. These types of policies ensure formerly incarcerated people get a more fair shot at finding work when they return to their communities. Gov. Hogan vetoed this bill, and the legislature could override his veto in January.



Strengthen wage and hour protections:

- Include those left out of current minimum wage laws
- Update outdated rules for who must be paid overtime
- Require fair scheduling, so workers know their schedules enough in advance to plan for child care and other needs
- Ensure pay stub transparency, so workers know they're being paid for all hours worked
- Strengthen protections against retaliation for workers who file complaints for wage or other violations



Paid family leave. Maryland should follow the lead of other states that have created public insurance programs that allow anyone to receive a portion of their normal pay when taking longer-term leave for the birth or adoption of a child, to recover from serious illness, or to care for a family member.



Limit use of salary history. For several years, the General Assembly has considered but not advanced legislation that would limit the use of salary history in setting a person's wages. Women and people of color often receive lower wages as the result of discrimination. If future employers then use their salary history to set their pay, that wage discrimination can reduce their earnings throughout their careers.

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