

The Power of Simplicity**Federal Updates**

The DOL has extended the validity of its current online notices and medical certification [forms](#) for use with leaves of absence under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) through August 31, 2021. The DOL has not made any substantive changes to these forms.

The DOL [announced](#) the updated minimum wage rates that must be paid to workers performing work on or in connection with federal contracts covered by Executive Order (E.O.) 13658, *Establishing a Minimum Wage for Contractors*. Beginning January 1, 2019, the rates are \$10.60 per hour for non-tipped covered workers and covered tipped workers must be paid a cash wage of at least \$7.40 per hour.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) [announced](#) the issuance of six new opinion letters addressing questions about whether employer policies on compensation and unpaid medical leave comply with the [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#) and the [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#).

The U.S. Department of Labor [announced](#) the launch of a new digital platform, [Apprenticeship.gov](#), which features an Apprenticeship Finder tool that offers career seekers a platform to search for apprenticeships by city, state and occupation, as well as connects job seekers to high-skilled, high-paying careers.

The DOL [announced](#) the formation of an Office of Compliance Initiatives within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy to strengthen employer compliance assistance. New compliance assistance initiatives include the launch of the [www.employer.gov](#) website collecting resources to assist job creators in complying with federal laws.

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has released [Field Assistance Bulletin \(FAB\) 2018-4: Determining Whether Nurse or Caregiver Registries are Employers of the Caregiver](#) to help Wage and Hour Division (WHD) field staff determine whether home care, nurse, or caregiver registries (registries) are employers under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The federal [Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act](#) made changes to many laws, including the Fair Credit Reporting Act, which are effective September 21, 2018. Section 301 of the Act amends the section of the FCRA pertaining to the obligations of background check vendors (also known as consumer reporting agencies or CRAs) to take certain actions when they are notified that a consumer has been or is about to become the victim of fraud or identity theft (15 U.S.C § 1681c-1).

On July 24, 2018, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) issued a [press release](#) confirming that its Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) division had served 2,738 I-9 Notices of Inspection (NOIs) to US businesses around the country after serving 2450 during its first phase earlier this year.

[E-Verify.gov](#) is a new website providing information about E-Verify and Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, including employee rights and employer responsibilities in the employment verification process.

Beginning September 11, 2018, [USCIS](#) will be expanding the temporary suspension of premium processing for cap-subject H-1B petitions, expected to last until February 19, 2019.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that the fees charged by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for premium processing of certain visa petitions will increase from the current rate of \$1,225 to \$1,410, beginning October 1, 2018. The [new rule](#) was published in the Federal Register on August 31, 2018.