

Massachusetts Minimum Wage Rates to Increase Effective January 1, 2021 and New State Holiday

BY ROBERT G. YOUNG • DECEMBER 31, 2020

As the calendar (finally) flips from 2020 to 2021, brewers should keep in mind a few changes to the Massachusetts wage and hour laws that go into effect in the new year.

The Massachusetts minimum wage is set to increase effective as of January 1, 2021. The new minimum wage will be $13.50 per hour. Likewise, the minimum service rate, for tipped employees, will increase to $5.55 per hour as of January 1. Both increases were set by a 2018 law that put Massachusetts on a path to a $15 minimum wage (so there will be additional increases in 2022 and 2023).

The good news is that the premium pay rate for Sunday/holiday hours in the retail industry, set under Massachusetts' archaic blue laws, will decrease to 1.2 times the employee's regular rate as of January 1, 2021. The decrease in the Sunday/holiday premium mirrors the increase in the minimum wage. By January 2023, the premium rate for Sunday/holiday hours will vanish.

Of note also is that the premium pay requirement will apply to a new state holiday: Juneteenth. To be celebrated on June 19, Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. Massachusetts adopted this day as an official state holiday in a bill passed earlier this year.

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