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California's Minimum Wage Is Spiking Again (by 25 Percent!) – This Is Not An April Fool's Joke!

California Employment Law Update on **February 20, 2024**

California's minimum wage is already one of the highest in the nation at $16 per hour (although Sacramento's efforts pale in comparison to those of cities and towns across the Golden State, which have created a patchwork quilt of over 40 different minimum wage obligations up and down the state). Now, as we have previously reported here, the rate is set to increase by another 25 percent to a whopping $20 per hour for fast food employees on April 1, 2024—April Fools! … except not. (For those watching at home, you may recall that rate increased to $16 per hour just a month ago on January 1st.)

This will result in the California fast food sector having the highest minimum wage in California if not the nation, narrowly beating out reigning champion West Hollywood. (The $20 minimum wage will only apply to fast food chains with more than 60 locations nationwide.)

And the thrills don't stop there. At a recent televised debate between candidates for California's open Senate seat, Congressional Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA) reiterated her proposal for an eye-popping $50 minimum wage statewide (equivalent to about $104,000/year when working fulltime). California employers had better buckle up—2024, like every year, is gearing up to be a wild ride. In other news, according to the California Policy Center's "Book of Exoduses," more than 240 companies have fled California to more tax- and business-friendly states in the past three years alone.

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