

# 2024



# LABOR DAY REPORT







2024 Labor Day Report  
Office of the Illinois Attorney General



*Attorney General Raoul speaks at a panel at Netroots Nation, a conference to discuss contemporary issues and share ideas, with panel moderator Kyle George and panel participants the Rev. Brenda Mitchel and Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison. Attorney General Raoul collaborates with attorneys general throughout the country to advocate for workers at the federal level in policy and litigation.*

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# A MESSAGE

## FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL



Each year on Labor Day, we gather to observe the important contributions that workers in Illinois and across the country make in building and shaping our society. As a strong supporter of workers, I am pleased to present my office's third Labor Day Report and share with you my office's efforts and achievements to enforce labor laws and protect and uplift workers in Illinois.

In the past year, my office has continued its efforts to protect workers. We continue to add staff to our Workplace Rights Bureau, helping the bureau to better serve Illinois residents. In addition to the Workplace Rights Bureau, attorneys and staff throughout the office have contributed to our office's efforts to ensure that working people across Illinois can work in safe environments free of discrimination and wage theft. I am pleased with the work they've done to make our office and Illinois a national leader in protecting workers' rights.

My office's achievements in defending and protecting workers have only been possible due to the continued efforts of advocates, labor unions, organizations, businesses and workers who speak out about violations of Illinois labor laws. These partners are vital to our efforts and help ensure that violations of Illinois labor laws are swiftly reported so that we may address them. I encourage anyone with questions or concerns about their workplace to reach out to the Workplace Rights Bureau. Our bilingual attorneys and staff are happy to provide support, resources, and educational outreach to make sure that workers know and recognize their rights and have a place to turn to if they need help upholding Illinois labor laws. Together, we can continue to improve Illinois for all workers.

Happy Labor Day!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Raoul".

Kwame Raoul  
Attorney General

# INTRODUCTION TO THE BUREAU

The Workplace Rights Bureau protects and advances the employment rights of all Illinois workers. The bureau has existed within the office for nearly a decade, but it was codified into law in 2020 under Public Act 101-0527, which amended the Illinois Attorney General Act to create the Worker Protection Unit within The Attorney General's Office. The law also gave the bureau enhanced authority to enforce labor laws in Illinois. The Workplace Rights Bureau works with other bureaus within The Attorney General's Office; federal, state, and local agencies like the U.S. and Illinois departments of labor; as well as community and labor organizations to protect Illinois workers.

In addition to the Workplace Rights Bureau, attorneys and staff from other divisions and bureaus of the Office of the Illinois Attorney General provide important services that help working people. Attorneys from the Civil Appeals Division, which represents the state in both federal and state appellate courts, coordinate with attorneys general offices across the country to protect workers' rights through multistate actions. The Government Representation Division provides legal representation for the state and all state officers and agencies in civil litigation for actions

taken in their official capacity. Within the Government Representation Division, the assistant attorneys general of the General Law Bureau represent the Illinois Department of Labor in courts across Illinois. In addition, the Civil Rights Bureau also works in tandem with the Workplace Rights Bureau to address instances of alleged employment discrimination. The Attorney General's Environmental Enforcement Division and Environmental Crimes Bureau enforce the state's environmental laws, including several laws that protect workers.



*Attorney General Raoul stands with Northwestern University School of Law students from the inaugural class of the William R. Rivkin Law and Public Advocacy Fellows Program. Attorney General Raoul discussed his path to becoming attorney general and his efforts on various public policy issues.*

## WAGES AND MISCLASSIFICATION

The Workplace Rights Bureau investigates and takes action against employers who commit systematic and widespread wage law violations in Illinois, including violations of the Minimum Wage Law, the Employee Classification Act, the Prevailing Wage Act, the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act, and the Illinois Day and Temporary Labor Services Act.

Through this work, Attorney General Raoul's Workplace Rights Bureau ensures that owed and unpaid wages are recovered for Illinois workers. Simultaneously, these efforts ensure that law-abiding employers are not at a competitive disadvantage against businesses that violate Illinois' wage laws to provide lower-cost services. As a result, the Workplace Rights Bureau plays an important role in ensuring that employers pay their share of payroll taxes, which are necessary for providing vital government services.

## NOTABLE WORK

**Returning Stolen Overtime Wages to Workers:** In December 2023, Attorney General Raoul announced a settlement requiring Greenridge Farm Inc., a deli meat processing company, to pay \$3 million in stolen back wages and damages to more than 280 current and former employees. Greenridge employees worked beyond 40 hours each week. Greenridge allegedly paid employees with a paycheck for up to 40 hours of work. All hours worked by employees in excess of 40 per week were paid in cash and off the books by Greenridge at the employees' regular rate of pay instead of at an overtime rate of pay. The settlement allowed employees to recover nearly 2.5 times their owed wages and covered the time period from January 2015 to March 2022. Under the agreement, Greenridge also overhauled its payroll process to ensure that it tracks and pays all hours worked, and to provide this information to employees on their paychecks. The company also agreed to three years of monitoring by The Attorney General's Office.

**Holding Employers Responsible for Illegally Deducting from Wages:** In July 2023, Attorney General Raoul announced a settlement resolving an investigation by The Attorney General's Office and the Illinois Department of Labor into a medical staffing company's practice of deducting fees from employee wages when workers missed shifts. Under the settlement, GrapeTree Medical Staffing LLC agreed to pay more than \$950,000 in back wages and interest to approximately 3,000 current and former employees in Illinois. The Workplace Rights Bureau, working in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Labor, found that GrapeTree charged employees a fee in the form of an unauthorized payroll deduction if they did not show up for a shift or canceled a shift within 72 hours. The fees deducted ranged in size from \$50 to \$200. Under the settlement, GrapeTree agreed to end the practice in Illinois.

**“Any company doing business in the state of Illinois must follow laws that require employees to be fairly paid for the time they work. This settlement sends a message that employers cannot get away evading Illinois law. I am committed to holding businesses – large and small – accountable for violating laws that safeguard workers and support law-abiding businesses in Illinois.”**

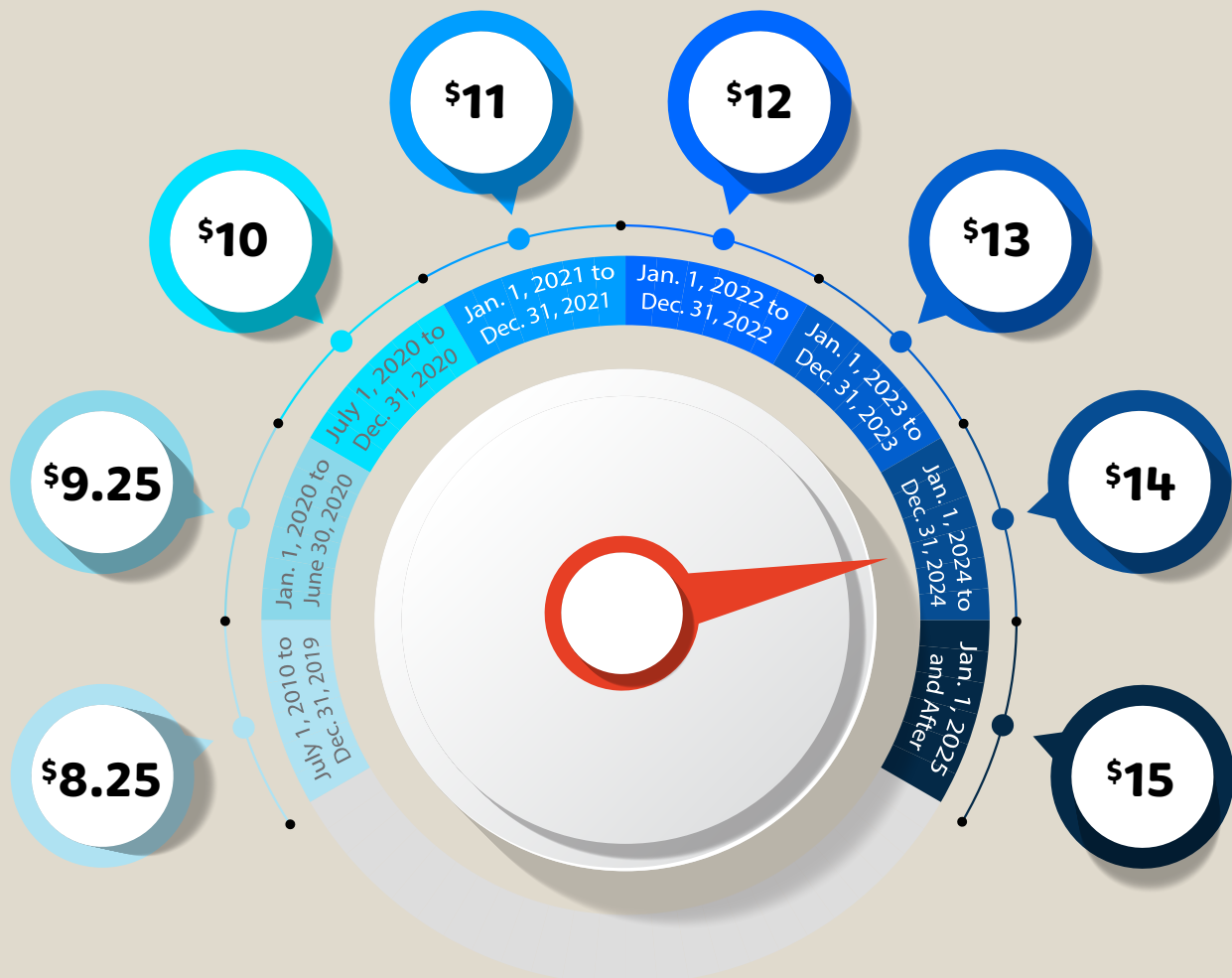
**Attorney General  
Kwame Raoul**

*Announcing the settlement  
with Greenridge Farm Inc.*

# Illinois Minimum Wage Law to Increase Annually Until 2025



In February 2019, Gov. JB Pritzker signed SB 1, which amended the Minimum Wage Law to increase the minimum wage from \$8.25 to \$15 by January 1, 2025. The Workplace Rights Bureau, along with the Illinois Department of Labor, investigates violations of the Minimum Wage Law and when appropriate, brings actions against employers who violate the law by paying their employees less than the state's minimum wage.



**Ensuring Workers Are Paid for All Time Worked:** In January 2024, The Attorney General's Office announced an agreement with two trucking companies - Velasco Enterprises Inc. and Partner's Hauling Inc. - and their owner, Juan Velasco, to pay drivers \$335,000 for unpaid time spent driving between worksites. The drivers also were not paid for all the time they spent working more than 40 hours per week and were not paid the prevailing wage rate when making deliveries to public projects. In addition to agreeing to pay owed wages, the companies agreed to follow heightened record keeping requirements designed to prevent future violations of the law.

**Calling for a Higher Minimum Wage for Federal Contractors:** Since May 2022, The Attorney General's Office has led coalitions of attorneys general to file amicus (also known as "friend" or "friend of the court") briefs in two district courts and the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the 5th, 9th, and 10th Circuits supporting the federal government's decisions to increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour for certain federal contractors. Attorney General Raoul and the coalitions argued that an increased minimum wage leads to improved morale and productivity for workers, as well as improved service and enhanced consumer experiences. In April 2024, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the federal government's decision to increase the minimum wage in *Bradford v. USDOL*.

**Protecting the Right to Overtime Wages:** In December 2023, The Attorney General's Office and the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) filed an amicus brief before the Illinois Supreme Court in *Mercado v. S&C Electric Company*. In this case, hourly factory assembly workers argue that their employer should include bonus payments when calculating their baseline pay rate, which subsequently impacts the value of their overtime hourly wage. The Attorney General's Office and IDOL argue in their brief that employers generally must include all employee compensation – not just hourly compensation – when calculating the baseline pay rate and that an employer cannot pay workers in non-hourly wages and then claim the payment is a gift. Litigation on this matter is still pending.

**Enforcing IDOL Judgments:** On behalf of the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL), between July 2023 and June 2024, the General Law Division in the Office of the Attorney General recovered more than \$500,000 in unpaid wages and penalties based on its referrals from IDOL.



# NON-COMPETES, NO POACH, AND FREEDOM TO WORK

Attorney General Raoul's Workplace Rights Bureau protects workers and their ability to seek new employment opportunities through their efforts to fight non-compete and "no-poach" agreements. Non-compete agreements prevent workers from leaving their jobs in search of better opportunities with a new

employer. While the Federal Trade Commission implemented a new rule in April 2024 banning them nationwide, some employers have long used unreasonable and burdensome non-compete agreements to stop low-and middle-wage workers from seeking other employment that would have offered higher wages and better working conditions.

"No-poach" agreements are another common restraint on workers' freedom to seek gainful employment. No-poach agreements prevent two or more competitors from hiring another's workers. These unlawful agreements chill workers' opportunities by limiting who will hire any given applicant. These agreements have been used by the temporary staffing industry to suppress wages for workers and prevent competition. No-poach agreements can limit low-wage workers' abilities to improve their employment circumstances by taking another job.

## NOTABLE WORK

**Fighting No-Poach Agreements and Fixing Wages in the Temporary Staffing Industry:** In November 2023, Attorney General Raoul announced a settlement with Colony Display LLC that resolved allegations that Colony facilitated no-poach agreements and engaged in a wage-fixing scheme with three staffing agencies. The settlement requires Colony to pay more than \$1 million to compensate temporary workers who were impacted by the unlawful activity. Colony also agreed to refrain from conduct that would violate antitrust law and to implement measures designed to ensure that affected workers can return to work at Colony and its staffing agencies.

Similarly, in July 2023, Attorney General Raoul announced a settlement with Elite Staffing Inc. one of the staffing agencies that allegedly engaged in the wage-fixing and no-poach agreements at Colony. Under the settlement, Elite agreed to pay \$1.5 million to compensate workers impacted by the unlawful activity and agreed to notify workers of their rights and prevent similar violations at other Elite client sites.



*In January 2024, Attorney General Raoul attended the 38th Annual Interfaith Breakfast in Chicago. Attorney General Raoul works with a variety of stakeholders to defend the rights of workers.*

**Protecting the Labor Market from Anticompetitive Schemes:** In January 2024, the Illinois Supreme Court unanimously ruled in favor of The Attorney General’s Office in a case where staffing agencies had a no-poach agreement facilitated by the agencies’ client company. The defendants argued that they were exempt from Illinois’ antitrust law to avoid liability from their actions. The Supreme Court ruled that the labor market was not exempt from the Illinois Antitrust Act and the agreement between the defendants, as alleged, was so anticompetitive that it violated antitrust law.

**Defending Franchise Workers from Unfair No-Poach Agreements:** In October 2023, Attorney General Raoul joined an amicus brief urging the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey to support former Jackson Hewitt tax preparers who say they were harmed by no-poach agreements utilized by the nationwide tax preparation chain. Raoul and a coalition of attorneys general argued that that no-poach agreements, which prohibit corporate-owned and franchise Jackson Hewitt locations from hiring each other’s workers, violate antitrust laws and harm workers. Raoul also argued the practice represents restraints of trade because Jackson Hewitt and its franchisees are direct competitors in the labor market to hire tax preparers. In April 2024, Jackson Hewitt settled the case by agreeing to pay \$10.8 million to the tax preparers who were affected by the no-poach agreement.

# MULTISTATE EFFORTS TO PROTECT WORKERS' RIGHTS

The Attorney General's Office works with attorneys general offices throughout the country to advocate for workers, including at the federal level. The office frequently makes recommendations about federal regulations that would strengthen workers' rights, submits amicus briefs in litigation with national implications for workers, and sends letters to Congressional leadership advocating for the passage of new laws that would benefit workers. When laws and rules that hurt workers are proposed or implemented, the office

works with other attorneys general to file lawsuits against the federal government or amicus briefs in support of workers.

## NOTABLE WORK

### **Protecting the Right to Prevailing Wages in the Green Economy:**

Attorney General Raoul led a coalition of 11 attorneys general urging the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service to adopt enforcement measures under the Inflation Reduction Act that would protect workers' rights to receive prevailing wages on renewable energy and green economy projects where employers claim expanded tax credits. Raoul and the coalition noted that the IRS has the authority to initiate a formal collaboration with the U.S. Department of Labor, which has extensive experience enforcing prevailing wage requirements, and that

such a collaboration would allow the IRS to more effectively gather contemporaneous certified payroll from employers intending to claim tax credits for green economy projects.

**Fighting Arbitration Agreements that Reduce Worker Power:** In November 2023, Attorney General Raoul led an amicus brief before the U.S. Supreme Court urging it to reverse a lower court decision holding that only workers who are employed by a company in the transportation industry can be exempt under the transportation-worker exemption to the Federal Arbitration Act. In their brief, Raoul and the attorneys general asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse that ruling because it is inconsistent with the plain text of the law and because



*Attorney General Raoul speaks at a conference hosted by Blacks in Green, a community-based environmental justice organization. The Attorney General's Office partners with state and federal entities to advocate for policies that protect workers from being injured in dangerous workplaces.*



it would be unworkable as a practical matter. In April 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously reversed the lower court's decision and ruled that a transportation worker did not need to work in the transportation industry to qualify for the transportation-worker exemption to the Federal Arbitration Act.

**Advocating to End Non-Compete Agreements Nationwide:** Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of 18 attorneys general to submit comments in support of the Federal Trade Commission's proposed rule that would eliminate non-compete clauses in employment contracts in most circumstances. In their filed comment, Raoul and the coalition argued that the FTC's rule would significantly benefit workers, especially low- and middle-wage workers, businesses, and the economy as a whole; promote gender and racial equity; and improve working conditions in the health care industry. In April 2024, the FTC issued the final rule which banned non-competes nationwide and required employers to provide notice to workers who are bound by existing non-competes that they will not be enforcing them.

**Stopping No-Poach Agreements in Franchise Agreements:** Following on prior efforts to halt non-compete agreements in the fast-food industry, The Attorney General's Office led a bipartisan coalition of 21 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit opposing "no-poach" provisions used by McDonald's in its franchise agreements. In the brief, Raoul and the collation argued that such agreements violate federal antitrust laws and interfere with workers' ability to seek better employment opportunities, wages, and benefits. The 7th Circuit ruled in favor of the workers and sent the case back to the District Court for additional review. The U.S. Supreme Court denied McDonald's request to hear the case.

**Supporting Overtime Protections for Salaried Workers:** Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of 14 attorneys general in November 2023 in submitting a comment letter to the U.S. Department of Labor in support of a proposed rule updating who is exempt from minimum and overtime pay requirements under the Fair Labor Standards Act's (FLSA) executive, administrative and professional employees minimum wage and overtime pay requirements. The proposed rule would expand the number of salaried workers who would qualify to earn overtime for any time worked beyond 40 hours per week. The U.S. Department of Labor finalized the rule, and it went into effect on July 1, 2024. Under the new rule, salaried workers who make less than \$844 per week (equivalent to \$43,888 per year) would be eligible for overtime. That threshold would increase to \$1,128 per week (\$58,656 per year) in 2025, and would then be adjusted on July 1, 2027, and every three years thereafter.

### **Protecting Department Store Workers from Harmful No-Poach Agreements:**

Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in August 2023 to file an amicus brief with the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals in support of former employees of Saks department stores who were harmed by no-poach agreements between Saks and other sellers of luxury brand goods. In the amicus brief, Attorney General Raoul stressed that no-poach agreements suppress competition for employees, depress wages, and limit workers' mobility. Litigation in this matter is pending.

**Supporting Efforts to Protect Workers with Joint Employers:** In December 2022, Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of attorneys general to urge the National Labor Relations Board to implement a rule that creates standards for determining whether an entity qualifies as a joint employer, a secondary employer who shares or codetermines matters governing the essential terms and conditions of employment. The rule would ensure accountability for joint employers and protect against violations of workers' rights. In October 2023, the National Labor Relations Board implemented the final rule to change the standard for determining joint employment, and that rule went into effect in February 2024.

## **EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION**

Every worker in Illinois should be able to work without fear of being the victim of discrimination. Unfortunately, too often this is not the case. The Workplace Rights Bureau works with the Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau and the Illinois departments of Labor and Human Rights to investigate and act in cases where workers face discrimination because of their sex, race, ethnicity, gender identity, or any other class protected by the Illinois Human Rights Act.

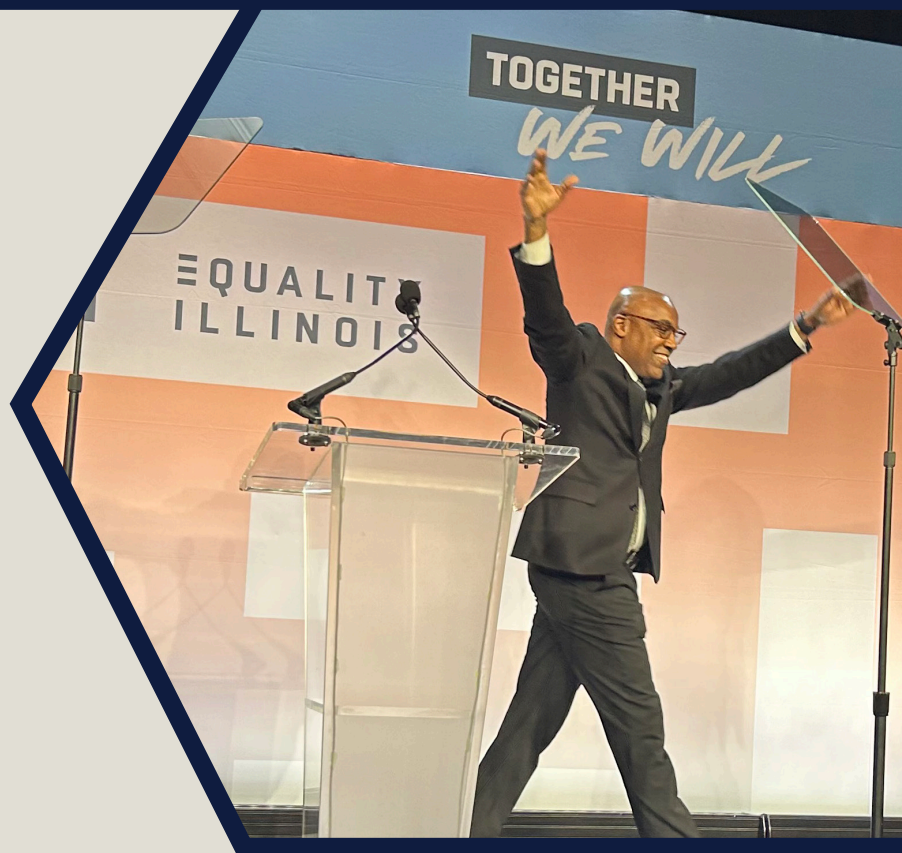
Employees who are victims of employment discrimination are less likely to be hired and promoted than their counterparts, and they also tend to be paid less and face more severe sanctions for errors at work. Over their lifetimes, discriminated-against workers earn far less money and have far more stressful careers than other workers. The Workplace Rights Bureau has pledged to take an active role in stopping and preventing workplace discrimination and upholding equal opportunity for all people in their workplaces.

### **NOTABLE WORK**

**Enhancing the Illinois Human Rights Act to Increase Enforcement Tools and Strengthen its Protections:** This spring, the Attorney General led the charge to pass House Bill 5371 through the General Assembly. The bill amended the Illinois Human Rights Act to better combat discrimination by improving civil rights protections for



people in Illinois. The legislation dramatically increased The Attorney General's Office's ability to remedy discrimination by granting the office authority to seek restitution for victims of discrimination. Furthermore, the legislation increased the maximum penalty amounts violators may be fined. For example, a business that routinely discriminates against multiple employees could be liable for a penalty for each worker who experiences discrimination. The amendments also clarified that victims have the right to take action to collect judgments, even if they do not intervene in the state's enforcement action. Gov. JB Pritzker signed the bill into law in August 2024. It will be completely in effect by January 1, 2025.



*Attorney General Raoul crosses a stage at the Equality Illinois Gala on February 3, 2024. The Attorney General's Office works with the General Assembly, state agencies and other stakeholders to strengthen policies that protect workers from discrimination.*

**Affirming Corporate Diversity Efforts:** In July 2023, Attorney General Raoul sent a letter to Fortune 100 companies in support of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in the workplace. Raoul applauded corporate efforts to recruit diverse workforces and create inclusive work environments while encouraging the companies to double-down on diversity-focused programs. The letter stressed that the businesses and workers of America should not be intimidated into abandoning diversity goals at a time when they are more important than ever.

**Advocating for the Rights of Pregnant Workers:** In October 2023, The Attorney General's Office submitted a comment letter supporting the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's proposed rule to implement the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. The proposed rule implements the requirements of the Act and provides examples of potential reasonable accommodations, from frequent breaks to modified work schedules. The EEOC issued the final rule in December 2023, but a coalition of states filed a lawsuit to challenge it. Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of other attorneys general to file an amicus brief in support of the EEOC's rule in May 2024. A district court dismissed the challenge, but the coalition of states who filed the lawsuit appealed the dismissal. Litigation on this matter is pending.

# IMMIGRATION

Non-citizen, immigrant workers often face significant challenges in their workplaces. Unscrupulous employers weaponize their workers' immigration status, threatening to have their workers deported if they step out of line. The Attorney General's Office works to ensure that immigrant workers enjoy the same protections as all other employees and can report violations without fear of retribution.

## NOTABLE WORK

**Urging Federal Government to Protect Victims of and Witnesses to Labor Violations from Deportation:** On July 2, 2024, Attorney General Raoul led a broad coalition of attorneys general and municipal offices of labor standards in urging the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to expand deferred action protections it grants to victims of and witnesses to violations of labor and employment rights from two years to four years. DHS deferred action protections support labor enforcement agencies by removing the fear of deportation that keeps undocumented and other noncitizen workers from reporting violations of labor laws and cooperating with government investigations into such violations. Unscrupulous employers that are willing to use threats of deportation to evade liability for their unlawful conduct often require post-investigation litigation and monitoring to be brought into compliance. It is important that the witnesses and victims be protected from such employers' threats and actions during the full period of enforcement efforts. On July 23, 2024, DHS announced it was extending its deferred action period to four years.



Workplace Rights Bureau Deputy Chief Christian Arizmendi, left, stands with DePaul Professor Dr. Lamont Black and Jorge Mújica, Strategic Campaigns Organizer at Arise Chicago, after presenting at the DePaul Migration Collaborative's 2024 Symposium, "Cities and Migration: Plans, Policies, and Action." Arizmendi shared examples of employment violations at the symposium and discussed how people can report suspected abuses of worker protection laws to the office for investigation. - Photo credit Jonathan Michael Castillo



**Pressing the Federal Government to Grant Work Authorization Permits for Temporary Immigrants:** Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of attorneys general in August 2023 to urge the Department of Homeland Security to grant work authorization permits for immigrants who have been allowed to enter and remain in the United States temporarily. Specifically, Attorney General Raoul asked the federal government to permit those who have applied for work authorization to work while applications are pending, automatically renew work authorization permits when their immigration status is renewed, and streamline and expedite processes.

**Supporting Efforts to Strengthen Worker Protection Measures for Agricultural Workers:** In November 2023, Attorney General Raoul expressed his support for changes to the U.S. Department of Labor’s H-2A program that would strengthen worker protection measures for H-2A agricultural workers and USDOL’s capability to monitor compliance and take enforcement actions. The changes would address concerns regarding USDOL’s ability to enforce regulations related to foreign labor recruitment, to improve accountability for employers who use various methods to attempt to evade the law and regulatory requirements, and to enhance worker protections for a marginalized workforce.

## WORKPLACE SAFETY

The Attorney General’s Office advocates for workplace safety because workers deserve safe working environments. Under state and federal law, workers have the right to work in a safe workplace. At the national level, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), a federal agency, investigates safety issues in private workplaces, including private employers in Illinois, and The Attorney General’s Office collaborates with other attorneys general offices to push for stronger workplace safety standards. At the state and local level, The Attorney General’s Office also works with Illinois OSHA, a division of the Illinois Department of Labor that oversees safety in governmental workplaces, the Pollution Control Board, other state agencies, and the Illinois General Assembly to ensure that all workers in Illinois are safe in their workplaces.

### NOTABLE WORK

**Petitioning Federal Officials to Protect Workers from Extreme Heat in the Workplace:** In February 2024, The Attorney General’s Office urged the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to implement nationwide emergency temporary extreme heat standards, urged Congress to pass legislation to direct OSHA to implement an interim heat standard, and urged

the White House to support efforts to protect heat-vulnerable workers. This petition renewed a request also made in February 2023. Attorney General Raoul called on OSHA to fulfill its legal obligation to workers and issue an emergency temporary standard, including a heat exposure threshold and required preventative measures, such as water breaks and shade, for farmworkers and construction workers. In July 2024, OSHA proposed a rule that required employers to develop a plan to control heat hazards in workplaces affected by excessive heat by implementing requirements for drinking water, taking breaks and controlling indoor heat.

**Resolving to Protect Transparency about Injuries in the Workplace:** Attorney General Raoul asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to dismiss a lawsuit against the federal government after OSHA adopted a final rule to protect workers safety. In May 2019, Attorney General Raoul and several other attorneys general filed suit against OSHA after the agency decided to roll back public reporting of workplace health and safety information. The final rule provides for reporting of injuries and illnesses in high-risk industries. The new rule also requires certain large employers to submit to OSHA annually information from two different workplace injury and illness tracking forms that employers are already required to maintain.

**Safeguarding Rules that Protect Workers Around Chemicals:** In August 2022, the U.S. EPA proposed a new chemical accident safety rule that the office supported. The EPA published a final rule in March 2024 which greatly strengthened protections to prevent chemical accidents, following many of the recommendations that The Attorney General’s Office offered in its comment. Adversary state and industry groups challenged the final rule in the U.S. Appellate Court for the D.C. Circuit in May 2024, and in June 2024 the office joined a multistate coalition to intervene in defense of EPA and the rule. This litigation is ongoing.



*Attorney General Raoul speaks at the City Club policy luncheon in Chicago in September 2023. The Attorney General frequently updates the public on efforts by the office to protect and defend the people of Illinois.*

# LEGISLATION

As part of the Attorney General office's efforts to defend workers, the Workplace Rights Bureau strives to ensure that Illinois residents are informed of changes to the state's worker protection laws. In recent months, the Illinois General Assembly has passed several laws that protect and empower workers.

**Expanding Protections Against Workplace Retaliation:** In May 2024, the Attorney General led the effort to pass House Bill 5561 in the Illinois General Assembly. This bill significantly increased The Attorney General's Office's ability to protect witnesses and other whistleblowers from workplace retaliation for reporting violations of the law. The bill increased the damages and penalties impacted workers may seek and that the office can recover. The bill also broadened the scope of conduct protected under the Illinois Whistleblower Act to protect employees who report or threaten to report violations of the law and threats to public health and safety. The legislation also expanded the definition of retaliation to include blacklisting an employee from future opportunities and immigration-based retaliation and provides statutory authority to The Attorney General's Office to bring suit against employers who retaliate or threaten retaliation against employees. Gov. JB Pritzker signed the bill into law in August 2024, and it will go into effect January 1, 2025.

**Protecting Temporary Workers:** In February 2024, the Attorney General went to court to defend the Temp Worker Fairness & Safety Act, a law passed in 2023 that requires equal pay for equal work for temporary workers. Specifically, the Act requires staffing agencies to pay long-term temporary workers at least as much total compensation—including both hourly wages and the hourly cost of fringe benefits—as comparable permanent employees of the client company. Under the Act, temporary workers also have the right to refuse assignments to client companies where there are active labor disputes. A group of staffing agencies challenged these provisions in federal court in late 2023, and the Attorney General successfully opposed most aspects of the challenge. However, the court blocked the requirement to include the hourly cost of fringe benefits in total compensation. The Attorney General has appealed that ruling, and that litigation is ongoing.





### **Prohibiting Mandatory Attendance at Political and Religious Meetings:**

During the 2024 session, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 3649, the Worker Freedom of Speech Act. The WFSA prohibits employers from taking adverse actions against employees who refuse to attend or participate in meetings about political and religious matters that are not related to their job duties. However, the legislation still permits training intended to foster a civil and collaborative workplace or prevent workplace harassment or discrimination. Gov. Pritzker signed the bill into law, and it will go into effect January 1, 2025.

### **Supporting Workplace Transparency of Personnel Documents and Pay Stubs:**

This spring, the General Assembly passed two bills that will help workers request and receive important records from their employers. House Bill 3763 requires that employers provide copies of employment contracts and agreements to employees upon request. Similarly, Senate Bill 3208 mandates that employers provide workers copies of their pay stubs upon request. Both bills will assist workers in getting vital documents from their employers that can be used in investigations of violations of labor laws, and they will go into effect January 1, 2025.

**Paid Leave for All Workers:** On January 1, 2024, the Paid Leave for All Workers Act went into effect, giving workers one hour of paid leave for every 40 hours worked, up to 40 total hours of paid leave each year. Workers are able to use this paid leave for any reason.



## **OUTREACH**

The Workplace Rights Bureau investigates alleged violations of Illinois' worker protection laws with the assistance of many partners that help to identify instances where workers have been victims of workplace rights violations. Unions, worker centers, businesses, advocacy organizations, and workers across Illinois take an active role in assisting the Workplace Rights Bureau to identify bad actors and protect Illinois workers and residents. The Workplace Rights Bureau frequently reaches out to its partners to ensure they can recognize violations of Illinois' worker protection laws and how they can report any suspected violations. The Attorney General's Office works with organizations such as unions, worker groups, and legislators to conduct targeted outreach. The bureau also partners with other governmental entities at the state and federal levels to enhance enforcement efforts and protect workers and law-abiding businesses.

*Workplace Rights Policy Specialist Andrew Drea speaks to the Statewide Building and Construction Trades meeting in Bloomington in January 2024 about the Workplace Rights Bureau's efforts to inform Illinois workers about their rights under the law in Illinois.*



*Workplace Rights Bureau Chief Alvar Ayala answers a question about the bureau's active cases and recent victories at the Chicago Federation of Labor's Cooperative Organizing Committee Meeting with Attorney General Raoul. Attorney General Raoul and Ayala also discussed the office's national efforts and partnerships with other attorneys general to protect workers.*

## NOTABLE WORK

### **Working with Legislators and Community Groups to Educate Illinois Residents:**

The Workplace Rights Bureau has partnered with legislators over the past year to ensure that Illinois residents know about their rights under the law. Members of the Workplace Rights Bureau have assisted legislators in answering questions from their constituents and have spoken to their constituents. For example, in September 2023, representatives of the Workplace Rights Bureau joined representatives of then-Rep. Mike Marron's office and Sen. Paul Faraci at a round table discussion hosted by Vermilion Advantage. Representatives talked to human resources representatives from Vermilion County about the Paid Leave for All Workers Act and the Temp Worker Fairness & Safety Act.

### **Informing Labor Groups on The Attorney General's Office's Efforts:**

The Workplace Rights Bureau spoke to various groups of union members to explain the process of some of its investigations. In January 2023, representatives of the Workplace Rights Bureau spoke at a Statewide Building and Construction Trades Meeting in Bloomington about the Bureau's efforts and investigations. Attorney General Raoul and representatives from the Bureau also spoke to the Chicago Federation of Labor's Cook County Cooperative Organizing Committee Meeting. Representatives from the Bureau have also spoken to Central Labor Councils in Kankakee and Madison counties about the office's efforts to protect working people.

**Speaking on the Bureau's Efforts to Protect Immigrants:** In April 2024, a representative from the Workplace Rights Bureau presented at the DePaul Migration Collaborative's 2024 Symposium, "Cities and Migration: Plans, Policies, and Action," which explored issues impacting migrants in urban communities. An attorney from the Bureau spoke about the Bureau's efforts, presented on employment laws in Illinois, and discussed case examples of employment violations that the Bureau resolved where there had been significant impacts on immigrant and migrant workers.

# RESOURCES

## OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL

### Chicago Main Office

115 S. LaSalle St.  
Chicago, IL 60603

### Springfield Main Office

500 S. Second St.  
Springfield, IL 62701

### Carbondale Main Office

1745 Innovation Drive  
Suites C & D  
Carbondale, IL 62903



### Workplace Rights Bureau

Helpline: 844-740-5076

Email: [workplacerrights@ilag.gov](mailto:workplacerrights@ilag.gov)

[illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/workplace-rights/](http://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/workplace-rights/)

### Civil Rights Bureau

Helpline: 877-581-3692

Email: [civilrights@ilag.gov](mailto:civilrights@ilag.gov)

[illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/civil-rights/](http://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/civil-rights/)

### Disability Rights Bureau

Chicago Helpline: 312-814-5684

Springfield Helpline: 217-524-2660

Email: [disability.rights@ilag.gov](mailto:disability.rights@ilag.gov)

[illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/disability-rights/](http://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights-of-the-people/disability-rights/)





## ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

### **Springfield Office**

524 S. 2nd St., Suite 400  
Springfield, IL 62701  
Phone: 217-782-6206

### **Chicago Office**

160 N. La Salle Street, C-1300  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Phone: 312-793-2800

### **Marion Office**

Regional Office Building  
2309 W. Main St., Suite 115  
Marion, IL 62959  
Phone: 618-993-7090

Email: [DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov)  
<http://labor.illinois.gov>

## CONCILIATION & MEDIATION

### **Employee Classification**

Phone: 217-782-1710  
Email: [DOL.ECA@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.ECA@Illinois.gov)

### **Personnel Records Review**

Phone: 312-793-2800  
Email: [DOL.PRR@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.PRR@Illinois.gov)

### **Equal Pay**

Phone: 866-372-4365  
Email: [DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov)

### **Prevailing Wage**

Phone: 312-793-3600  
Email: [DOL.PWD@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.PWD@Illinois.gov)

### **Equal Pay Registration Certificate**

Phone: 312-793-6797  
Email: [DOL.EPRC@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.EPRC@Illinois.gov)

### **Right to Privacy in the Workplace**

Phone: 312-793-7307  
Email: [DOL.RTPW@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.RTPW@Illinois.gov)

### **Job Opportunities For Qualified Applicants**

Phone: 312-793-7191  
Email: [DOL.BTB@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.BTB@Illinois.gov)

### **Victims' Economic Security & Safety Act (VESSA)**

Phone: 312-793-2800  
Email: [DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov)

### **Leave Rights Division**

Phone: 312-793-2600  
Email: [DOL.PaidLeave@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.PaidLeave@Illinois.gov)

### **Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification (WARN)**

Phone: 217-785-4420  
Email: [DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Questions@Illinois.gov)

For all Illinois agencies, individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can reach us by using the 7-1-1 relay service.

## FAIR LABOR STANDARDS DIVISION

### Child Labor Law

Phone: 312-793-5570

Child Labor Law Hotline: 800-645-5784

Email: [DOL.ChildLaborQuestions@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.ChildLaborQuestions@Illinois.gov)

### Day Labor Services

Phone: 312-793-8889

Day Labor Services Hotline: 877-314-7052

Email: [DOL.DayLabor@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.DayLabor@Illinois.gov)

### Minimum Wage/Overtime

Phone: 312-793-2804

Minimum Wage/Overtime: 800-478-3998

Email: [DOL.MWOT@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.MWOT@Illinois.gov)

### One Day Rest in Seven (meal period)

Phone: 312-793-2804

Email: [DOL.ODRISA@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.ODRISA@Illinois.gov)

### Private Employment Agencies

Phone: 312-793-2805

Email: [DOL.PrivateEmployment@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.PrivateEmployment@Illinois.gov)

### Sub-Minimum Wage & Sheltered Workshops

Phone: 312-793-2806

Email: [DOL.MWOT@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.MWOT@Illinois.gov)

### Wage Payment & Collection

Phone: 312-793-2808

Email: [DOL.Wages@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Wages@Illinois.gov)

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## ILLINOIS OSHA

### Public Sector Enforcement

Phone: 217-782-9386

Email: [DOL.Safety@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Safety@Illinois.gov)

### On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program for Employers

Phone: 800-972-4216

Email: [DOL.Consultation@Illinois.gov](mailto:DOL.Consultation@Illinois.gov)

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## OTHER WORKER AGENCIES

### Illinois Labor Relations Board

Springfield Office: 217-785-3155

Chicago Office: 312-793-6400

### Illinois Department of Human Rights

Chicago Office: 312-814-6200

Springfield Office: 217-785-5100

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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

### Wage and Hour Division

Hotline: 866-487-9243

[www.dol.gov/agencies/whd](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd)

### Occupation Safety and Health Administration

Hotline: 800-321-6742

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

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## OSHA ILLINOIS STATE PLAN OFFICES

These three Illinois State Plan offices cover public sector (state and local government) employers and workers with the exception of federal government employees, maritime employers (e.g., shipyards, marine terminals, longshoring), military facilities, Indian sovereignty workplaces, and the United States Postal Service.

### Chicago State Plan Office

160 N. LaSalle St., Suite C-1300

Chicago, IL 60601

Phone: 312-793-7308

Fax: 312-793-2081

### Marion State Plan Office

2309 W. Main St.

Marion, IL 62959

Phone: 618-993-7092

Fax: 618-993-7258

### Springfield State Plan Office

Lincoln Tower Plaza

524 South 2nd St., Suite 400

Springfield, IL 62701

Phone: 217-782-9386



## OSHA AREA OFFICES

The federal OSHA offices cover all private sector workplaces, federal agencies, maritime employers (e.g., shipyards, marine terminals, longshoring), military facilities, Indian sovereignty workplaces, and the United States Postal Service.

### Chicago North Area Office

2020 S.Arlington Heights Rd., Suite 102  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
Phone: 847-227-1700  
Fax: 847-227-1732

### Chicago South Area Office

8505 W. 183rd St., Suite C  
Tinley Park, IL 60487  
Phone: 708-342-2840  
Fax: 708-444-0042

### Naperville Area Office

1771 West Diehl Rd.  
Suite 210  
Naperville, IL 60563  
Phone: 630-300-7100  
Fax: 630-300-7098

### Peoria Area Office

5003 W.American Prairie Dr.  
Peoria, IL 61615  
Phone: 309-589-7033  
Fax: 309-589-7326

### Fairview Heights District Office

11 Executive Dr., Suite 11  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
Phone: 618-632-8612  
Fax: 618-632-5712

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## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

### Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Phone: 1-800-669-4000  
TTY: 1-800-669-6820  
ASL Video: 844-234-5122  
Email: [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov)  
[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

### Chicago District Office

John C. Kluczynski Federal Building  
230 S. Dearborn St., Suite 1866  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: 312-872-9777  
Fax: 312-588-1260

### St. Louis District Office

Robert A. Young Federal Building  
1222 Spruce St., Room 8.100  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
Phone: 314-798-1960  
Fax: 314-539-7894

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## NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD **Main** 1-844-762-NLRB • [publicinfo@nrlrb.gov](mailto:publicinfo@nrlrb.gov)

### Regional Office 13 Chicago, IL

219 S. Dearborn St.  
Suite 808  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: 312-353-7570  
Fax: 312-886-1341

### Subregional Office 33 Peoria, IL

101 SW Adams St.  
Suite 400  
Peoria, IL 61602  
Phone: 309-671-7080  
Fax: 309-671-7095

### Regional Office 14 St. Louis, MO

1222 Spruce St.  
Room 8.302  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
Phone: 314-539-7770  
Fax: 314-539-7794

Callers who are deaf or hard of hearing who wish to speak to an NLRB representative should send an email to [relay.service@nrlrb.gov](mailto:relay.service@nrlrb.gov). An NLRB representative will email the requester with instructions on how to schedule a relay service call.

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

### Civil Rights Division

Phone: 202-514-3847  
[www.justice.gov/crt](http://www.justice.gov/crt)

### Disability Rights Section

Phone: 202-307-0663  
Fax: 202-307-1197

### Employment Litigation Section

Phone: 202-514-3831  
TTY: 202-514-6780  
Fax: 202-514-1005



