

# California Legislature Introduces Several Employment Law Bills for 2025

Article By:

Christopher W. Olmsted

Charles L. Thompson, IV

---

California lawmakers introduced numerous bills early in the 2025 legislative session that could affect California employment law in significant ways. Although it is too soon to predict which bills, if any, will advance, the proposed bills could substantially affect California employers.

## Quick Hits

- California legislators have proposed bills in the 2025 legislative session that address pay transparency, automated decision systems, workplace surveillance, paid family leave, and employee training.
- The legislative session in California will end on September 12, 2025.
- The governor will have until October 12, 2025, to sign or veto bills passed by the state legislature.

California legislators have introduced the following employment law-related bills this session:

- [SB 642](#) would require pay scales provided in job ads to be no more than 10 percent above or below the mean pay rate within the salary or hourly wage range. The bill revises language to make clear that employers cannot pay an employee less than they pay employees of “another” sex, rather than “the opposite” sex, for substantially similar work.
- [AB 1018](#) would regulate the development and deployment of automated decision systems to make employment-related decisions, including hiring, promotion, performance evaluation, discipline, termination, and setting pay and benefits. The bill applies to machine learning, statistical modeling, data analytics, and artificial intelligence. It would require that employers allow workers to opt out of the automated decision system.
- [AB 1331](#) would place limits on workplace surveillance, including devices used for video or audio recording, electronic work pace tracking, location monitoring, electromagnetic tracking, and photoelectronic tracking. The bill would prohibit employers from using surveillance tools during off-duty hours or in private, off-duty areas, such as bathrooms, locker rooms, changing areas, breakrooms, and lactation spaces. The bill also would prohibit employers from monitoring a worker’s residence or personal vehicle.

- [SB 590](#) would expand eligibility for benefits under the state's paid family leave program to include individuals who take time off work to care for a seriously ill designated person, meaning any individual whose association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship. State law already permits paid leave to care for a seriously ill child, stepchild, foster child, spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, or grandchild.
- [AB 1371](#) would permit employees to refuse to perform a task assigned by an employer if the assigned task would violate safety standards, or if the employee has a reasonable fear that the assigned task would result in injury or illness to the employee or others. The bill would prohibit employers from disciplining or retaliating against an employee for refusing to perform the assigned task.
- [AB 1234](#) would revise the process for the state labor commissioner to investigate and hear wage theft complaints. The bill would require the labor commissioner to set a hearing date and establish procedures for the hearing within ninety days after issuing a formal complaint. It would require the labor commissioner to issue an order, decision, or award within fifteen days of the hearing, known as a Berman hearing.
- [AB 1015](#) would authorize employers to satisfy the state's workplace discrimination and harassment training requirements by demonstrating that the employee possesses a certificate of completion within the past two years.
- [SB 261](#) would establish a civil penalty for employers that fail to pay a court judgment awarded for nonpayment of work performed.

## Next Steps

Most of these bills are in the committee review stages and have not yet passed either the California Senate or Assembly. To advance, the bills must pass both legislative bodies. The last day for the legislature to pass bills is September 12, 2025. The governor will have until October 12, 2025, to sign or veto bills passed by the legislature.

California employers may wish to stay abreast of legislative action on state bills related to pay transparency, workplace surveillance, paid family leave, automated decision systems, employee training, and other employment law topics.

© 2025, Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C., All Rights Reserved.

---

National Law Review, Volume XV, Number 83

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/california-legislature-introduces-several-employment-law-bills-2025>