

# WELCOME 2026 LIGRA

LONG ISLAND GASOLINE RETAILERS ASSOCIATION, INC. & ALLIED TRADES



**JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2026**

Address: 270 Spagnoli Road Suite 203, Melville, NY 11747 | Website: [LIGRA.COM](http://LIGRA.COM)



**PMI USA tobacco nicotine pouches, are now sponsoring our bi-monthly LIGRA Newsletter mailings. We encourage our members to express their support for this partnership.**

**ZYN nicotine pouches provide 28 million<sup>1</sup> American adults who smoke cigarettes a better option than continued smoking. Government policies on tobacco and nicotine should be based on science and common sense policies to ensure adult smokers have access to FDA-authorized smoke-free products.**



## What Is ZYN?

- ◆ ZYN is a small pouch made with plant-based fibers that contains naturally-derived, pharmaceutical-grade nicotine, food-grade fillers, and flavorings for a smoke-free and spit-free experience.
- ◆ It is designed to be placed between the upper lip and gum, allowing the nicotine to be absorbed orally.
- ◆ ZYN is available with 2 nicotine levels (3mg and 6mg) in 10 varieties mirroring longstanding smokeless tobacco product flavors.
  - ▶ Flavored – Menthol, Cool Mint, Peppermint, Wintergreen, Spearmint, Cinnamon, Coffee, and Citrus.
  - ▶ Unflavored – Smooth and Chill.

## ZYN & Harm Reduction

- ◆ ZYN pouches have almost undetectable levels<sup>2</sup> of cancer-causing toxins compared to other smokeless tobacco products.<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ The overwhelming majority of ZYN users change their smoking behavior after starting ZYN.
  - ▶ Over 50 percent stopped smoking cigarettes.
  - ▶ Nearly one-third reduced the number of cigarettes smoked each day by more than half.<sup>4</sup>



## The "Swedish Experience" & Real-World Evidence

The Swedish experience continues to provide real-world evidence and epidemiological data demonstrating the power of smoke-free tobacco products to reduce the harm caused by cigarettes.

- ◆ Tobacco-related illness and mortality for men is lower in Sweden<sup>5</sup> than in any other European country.
- ◆ Smoking rates in Sweden have fallen to the lowest levels in Europe<sup>6</sup>, all while smoke-free product use has increased.

The Swedish experience is real-world evidence of how access to affordable, acceptable smoke-free products provides a better choice for adult smokers.

## Adult Smokers Deserve Access To Better Choices: Smoke-Free Products

- ◆ ZYN is not risk-free. It contains nicotine, which is addictive.
- ◆ For adults smokers, quitting all tobacco products is always the best choice.
- ◆ On average, nine out of 10<sup>7</sup> adult smokers continue smoking each year.
- ◆ ZYN is a better choice than continued smoking for these adult smokers.

Information provided by PMI Global Services, Inc. – January 2024. This information is intended for policy and regulatory discussions. It is not for advertising or promotional purposes and not intended for a consumer audience.

<sup>1</sup> CDC, Cigarette Smoking in the U.S. (May 4, 2023), <http://tinyurl.com/mwvq422>

<sup>2</sup> BMJ Internal Study, (BMJ) 2022; 365: n1111 (pending publication)

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Tobacco Studies, Mortality Attributable To Tobacco Among Men in Sweden and Other European Countries: An Analysis of Data in a WHO Report (September 1, 2014), <http://tinyurl.com/2lu77dne>

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Tobacco Studies, Mortality Attributable To Tobacco Among Men in Sweden and Other European Countries: An Analysis of Data in a WHO Report (September 1, 2014), <http://tinyurl.com/2lu77dne>

<sup>5</sup> BMC Chemistry, Harmful And Potentially Harmful Constituents (PHCs) In Two Novel Nicotine Pouch Products In Comparison With Regular Swedish Tobacco Products And Pharmaceutical Nicotine Replacement Therapy Products (NRTs) (March 3, 2023), <http://tinyurl.com/y548t0p>

<sup>6</sup> OECD, State of Health in The EU: Sweden (December 13, 2023), <http://tinyurl.com/34u6m6>

<sup>7</sup> CDC, Cigarette Smoking in the U.S. (May 4, 2023), <http://tinyurl.com/mwvq422>

**FYI, you can now pay your LIGRA dues online with no fees for ACH payments. Contact our office to be set up for this convenience**

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## **WITH A NEW YEAR COMES A NEW STATE MINIMUM WAGE, PLUS A FEW OTHER EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED**

As January 1, 2026 approaches, New York State's scheduled minimum wage increases are set to take effect under a multi-year plan adopted by the Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul. These changes continue the state's effort to strengthen wage floors for workers across the state amid rising living costs and provide clearer pathways for future adjustments tied to inflation.

### **Minimum Wage Rates Increasing on January 1, 2026**

Effective January 1, 2026, New York's hourly minimum wage will rise by \$0.50 statewide, continuing a planned multi-year schedule that began in 2024:

- New York City, Long Island & Westchester County: Minimum wage increases from \$16.50 to \$17.00 per hour.

Remainder of New York State: Minimum wage rises from \$15.50 to \$16.00 per hour.

Employers are reminded it is important to keep accurate records of all hours worked. Additionally, with the new minimum wage, comes a new minimum wage overtime rate (\$24.00 per hour) for all hours worked over 40 hours in a given work week. For any employee earning over the state's minimum wage, their overtime rate is determined by multiplying their regular wage rate by 1.5.

### **Exempt Employee Salary Exemptions**

In addition to the increased minimum wage, the minimum salary exemption for any executive or administrative employee will increase from \$1,237.50 per week to \$1,275.00 per week (or \$66,300 per year). Whether an employee is properly be classified as exempt from receiving overtime as either an executive or administrative employees depends on both the employees' day-to-day responsibilities and weekly salary. Employers should consult with counsel to confirm that they have appropriately classified any employee as exempt.

### **Employee Uniform Pay Requirements**

If an employee is required to wear a uniform, the employer is required to help with maintenance of the uniform, on a weekly basis.

A "required uniform" is defined as clothing required to be worn while working at the request of the employer and generally not allowed to be worn outside of work.

Employers who require employees to wear a uniform have three maintenance options:

- Launder the uniform;
- Maintain the uniform itself; or
- Pay the employee an allowance.

For employers who pay the employee a uniform maintenance allowance, the new rates for reimbursement are as follows:

New York City, Long Island, & Westchester County	
Work week 30 or more hours	\$21.10 per week
Work week between 20-30 hours	\$116.75 per week
Work week less than 20 hours	\$10.10 per week

Employers who provide a "wash and wear" uniform may avoid having to pay the uniform maintenance fee. For a uniform to qualify under the "wash and wear" exemption:

- The uniforms must be made of "wash and wear" material that can be routinely washed and dried with other clothing.
  - The uniform should not require special care such as ironing, dry cleaning, or commercial laundering.
- Employers must provide a sufficient number of uniforms or reimburse employees for them, ensuring an employee can wear a fresh uniform for each shift.



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1

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3

4

5

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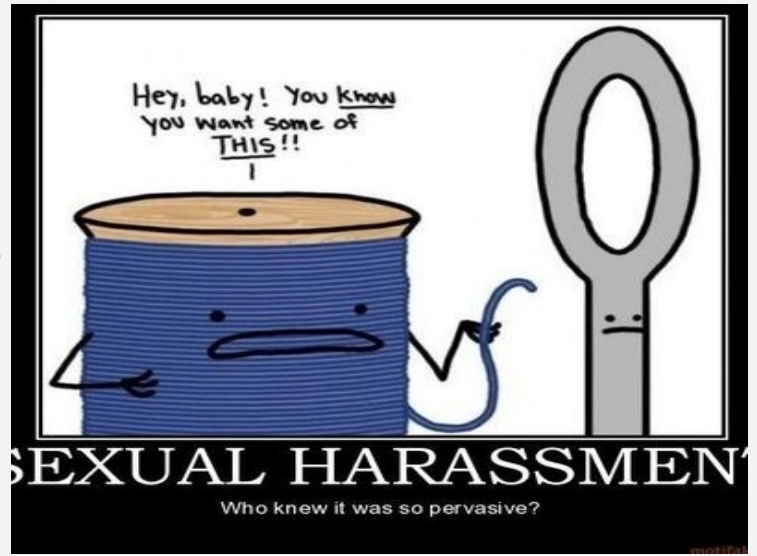
# TIME TO UPDATE YOUR TRAINING

New York State, MANDATES all employers, regardless of the company's size, must have a sexual harassment policy. Employers must also conduct ANNUAL interactive sexual harassment training and provide a written anti-harassment policy to ALL employees, to help keep you in compliance with these regulations.

To comply with the MANDATORY interactive sexual harassment training, LIGRA will be hosting this training class. These classes will be held in our LIGRA Office .

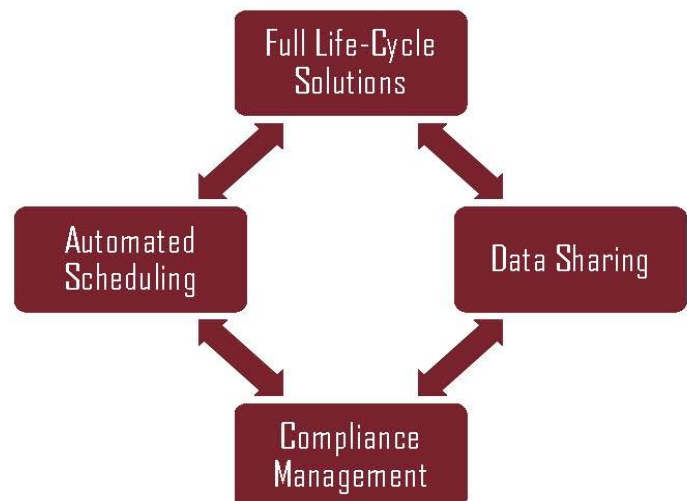
We do also offering sexual harassment training in addition, at your location.. The cost is \$40.00 per person for LIGRA members and \$75 per person for non-LIGRA members.

Contact us to set up your training, at [Chris@LIGRA.COM](mailto:Chris@LIGRA.COM)



## Compliance Programs

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- Site Compliance Management
  - Recommended Maintenance/Upgrades
  - Incorporating Compliance Inspection Program







Department  
of Labor

# Attention Miscellaneous Industry Employees

Minimum Wage hourly rates effective 1/1/2026-12/31/2026



New York City	
Large Employers (11 or more employees)	Small Employers (10 or less employees)
<b>Minimum Wage \$17.00</b>	<b>Minimum Wage \$16.50</b>
Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$24.25</b>	Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$24.25</b>
<b>Tipped workers</b>	<b>Tipped workers</b>
At least <b>\$11.35</b>	At least <b>\$11.00</b>
Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$19.25</b>	Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$19.25</b>
Long Island and Westchester County	Remainder of New York State
<b>Minimum Wage \$17.00</b>	<b>Minimum Wage \$16.00</b>
Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$24.25</b>	Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$23.25</b>
<b>Tipped workers</b>	<b>Tipped workers</b>
At least <b>\$11.35</b>	At least <b>\$10.70</b>
Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$19.25</b>	Overtime after 40 hours <b>\$18.10</b>

If you have questions, need more information or want to file a complaint, please visit  
[www.labor.ny.gov/minimumwage](http://www.labor.ny.gov/minimumwage) or call: **1-888-469-7365**.

**Credits and Allowances** that may reduce your pay below the minimum wage rates shown above:

- **Tips** – Your employer may use a limited amount of your tips to reduce your wages. This is called a tip credit. Your employer may take a tip credit only if your tips plus wages add up to at least the minimum wage. They must still pay you at least the tipped wage rates shown above.
- **Meals and lodging** – Your employer may claim a limited amount of your wages for meals and lodging that they provide to you, as long as they do not charge you anything else. The rates and requirements are set forth in wage orders and summaries, which are available online.

**Extra Pay** you may be owed in addition to the minimum wage rates shown above:

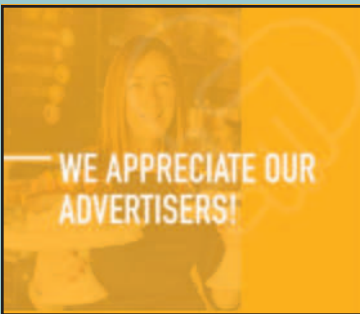
- **Overtime** – You must be paid 1½ times your regular rate of pay (no less than amounts shown above) for weekly hours over 40 (or 44 for residential employees).  
*Exceptions:* Overtime is not required for salaried professionals, or for executives and administrative staff whose weekly salary is more than 75 times the minimum wage rate.
- **Call-in pay** – If you go to work as scheduled and your employer sends you home early, you may be entitled to extra hours of pay at the minimum wage rate for that day.
- **Spread of hours** – If your workday lasts longer than ten hours, you may be entitled to extra daily pay. The daily rate is equal to one hour of pay at the minimum wage rate.
- **Uniform maintenance** – If you clean your own uniform, you may be entitled to additional weekly pay. The weekly rates are available online.

LS 207 (12/17)

## Minimum Wage Poster Post in Plain View



This poster is compliments of LIGRA  
for more information look on the following  
<https://labor.ny.gov/minimum-wage-lookup>



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## More laws and regulations to be aware of for 2026



**Limousine Age and Mileage Restrictions** S8308C/A8808C sets firm expirations for the age and mileage of stretch limousines. It makes it illegal to drive a stretch limo in New York if it's over 10 years old or has more than 350,000 miles on the odometer.

**Must Accept Cash** New York Senate Bill S4153A by Gov. Kathy Hochul, New York state

has enacted a sweeping requirement for "retail establishments" and "food stores" to accept cash payments for in-person transactions. The law, effective March 20, 2026, also prohibits charging cash-paying customers more than those using other payment methods. There is already a website established for consumers to report violations.



**Prenatal Leave** Effective January 1, 2025, all employers in New York State are required to provide employees with 20 hours of paid prenatal leave. This leave may only be used for employees who are expecting a child, and can be used for both fertility treatments and prenatal care. The 20 hours must be used within 1 year, which starts when the first leave is taken. The prenatal leave is provided in addition to the state mandated sick and safe time, and any other leave provided by the company. This leave does not rollover nor does it have to be paid out upon separation of employment

### New York Secure Choice Act

The New York State Secure Choice Savings Program (the "Program") is the state's retirement savings program for private-sector employees who do not have access to a retirement plan at work. Beginning in March 2026, employers who 1) have been in business for at least two years; 2) have 10 or more employees; and 3) do not already offer a retirement plan must either register for the Program or certify their exemption.

Employees age 18 and older are automatically enrolled in the Program if their employer participates. There are notably no fees for enrolled employers, but employees can expect a \$28 annual fee, charged quarterly.

Enrollment is being phased in based on employer size as follows:

- 30 or more employees – **March 18, 2026**
- 15 to 29 employees – **May 15, 2026**
- 10 to 14 employees – **July 15, 2026**

# 20

The hours of paid leave for prenatal care now available to pregnant women in New York



## MAJOR CHANGES COMING TO NYS DMV POINT SYSTEM

**Traffic Points** Effective February 2026, New York is making its point system stricter, requiring fewer points for suspension (10 vs. 11) and increasing points for offenses like speeding or cell phone use, with points staying on licenses longer.

## LIGRA press Release

### **GOVERNOR HOCHUL VETO A BLOW TO LONG ISLAND SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS, OPERATORS AND WORKERS**

Melville NY, December 17, 2025

#### **Statement by Steve Wunderlich, President Long Island Gasoline Retailers Association**

Governor Hochul squandered an opportunity to right a longstanding wrong that has frustrated mostly small family-owned and operated gasoline service station businesses in New York State for nearly thirty years. Despite industry representatives working with her administration for the last several years on regulations to update the state's vehicle safety inspection program, the Governor's veto "put the brakes on" improving the safety of the traveling public and providing these small businesses a fair fee level for performing this vital service.

Most vehicle owners would be shocked to learn that the fee NY stations are permitted by regulation to collect for the state-mandated safety inspection has been \$8 (\$10 minus \$2 to the state) for nearly three decades! Meanwhile, inflation and all manner of state, local taxes and fees continue to go up each year ostensibly to pay for the rising costs of government services.

There are 10,000 New York State licensed inspection stations, performing annual safety inspections for vehicles on New York roadways. We are forced to perform this safety inspection work essentially at a financial loss. When done properly, a safety and emissions inspection should take an inspector at least an hour to perform all the mandated tasks. The state's frozen-in-time rate of \$8, if paid to workers by a private sector employer for an hours work, would be a gross labor violation.

It is not reasonable to subcontract the enforcement of such a vital regulation to thousands of New Yorker businesses and continue to do so at a rate that has not been adjusted since 1986.

If I were to pay my inspectors at the rate the state pays me for inspections, you would shut my business down for labor violations. It is not reasonable to subcontract such a vital regulation to thousands of New Yorkers and continue to do so at a rate that has not been adjusted since 1986.

The inspection stations are small businesses that, at a minimum, should be allowed to recover the actual costs for performing the inspection, pay a legal and living wage, and do so while enhancing the safety of all New Yorkers. The bill the Governor vetoed would have done that.

The legislation would have simply directed the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles to conduct a study on updating the inspection standards and fees for the annual motor vehicle safety and emissions inspection in NY. Two hundred legislators supported this approach; none voted against it.

LIGRA leadership will continue to work with our state elected representatives and the administration to compel the timely release of the updated regulations and advance a commensurate adjustment in the safety inspection fee. Otherwise, we are committed to exploring other options on behalf of our membership.



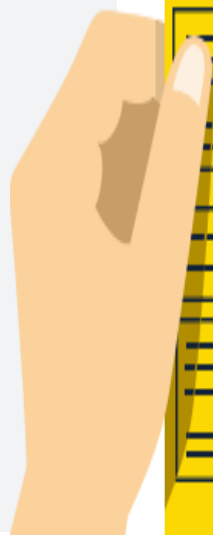


## Department of Motor Vehicles

The DMV field inspectors are out in force conducting undercover inspections. The fines they have been issuing have more than doubled, and court appearances have not significantly reduced these fines.

Therefore, it is important to ensure that all inspections are thorough and complete. These are some of the violations that licensed inspection stations can incur:

- Issuing inspection stickers without performing proper inspections.
- Using unauthorized or fraudulent inspection stickers.
- All lug nuts are checked.
- The ends of the wiper blades are intact.
- The rear safety belts are present and functional.
- There are batteries in the tint meter, and that all windows comply with the tint limits.
- Failing to maintain the required equipment or records.
- Performing inspections by uncertified inspectors.
- Conducting inspections outside the scope of the station's license (e.g., emissions testing without proper authorization).



## LIGRA

The Long Island Gasoline Retailers Association is a non-profit trade association located ON LONG ISLAND in New York State. We work locally, STATE WIDE, AND ON THE FEDERAL LEVEL WHEN NECESSARY. for PAST 89 years WE HAVE WORKED aggressively TO defend the small-scale, independent business owners, who comprise our membership

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