

## ■ MARYLAND WAGE AND HOUR LAW (*MINIMUM WAGE*)

**TERMS:** The Wage and Hour Law establishes a state minimum wage of \$8.75 an hour beginning July 1, 2016. The minimum wage is scheduled to rise to \$9.25 on July 1, 2017, and \$10.10 on July 1, 2018.

**Coverage in Agriculture** — Farm operators and other agricultural establishments that used more than 500 worker-days of agricultural labor in any calendar quarter during the preceding year (for example, 50 workers employed for 10 days, 20 workers employed for 25 days, or any other such combination occurring from January through March, April through June, July through September, or October through December) are generally required to pay their agricultural workers no less than the state minimum wage for every hour of employment.

**Exceptions** — The minimum wage *does not apply* to workers in either of the following categories:

(1) Individuals who (a) are employed as hand-harvest workers, (b) are paid on a piece-rate basis in an operation generally recognized as a piecework operation in the region, (c) commute to the farm daily from their permanent residence, and (d) were employed in agriculture for less than 13 weeks in the preceding calendar year.

(2) Workers 16 years of age or younger who (a) are employed as hand-harvest workers, (b) are paid on a piecework basis in a recognized piecework operation, (c) are employed on the same farm as their parent or guardian, and (d) are paid at the same piece rate paid to workers over age 16 on the same farm.

**Recordkeeping and Posting** — Farm employers covered by the Wage and Hour Law must keep a record of the name, address and occupation of each worker, the worker's rate of pay, the amount paid each pay period, and the hours worked each day and each workweek. The employer is also required to post a summary of the law and its associated regulations in a place easily accessible by the workers.

**ENFORCEMENT:** *Employment Standards Service Unit, Division of Labor and Industry, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 (410-767-2357)*. A worker who has not received full wages in accordance with the law may file a wage claim with the Department.

As an alternative to filing a claim with the Department, the law gives workers the right to sue the employer in civil court to enforce payment of the wages, using a private attorney or a public legal services program.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** An employer may not fire, discipline or discriminate in any way against a worker because the worker has filed a complaint, participated in a proceeding, or exercised any other right afforded by these provisions.