



# Legislative Update

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Presentation prepared for the  
Commission on Health and Safety and  
Workers' Compensation by Sulma Guzmán

**December 11, 2025**

# Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs (OLRA)

## 2025 Legislative Session

- The second year of a two-year session.
  - OLRA tracked 108 bills.
- 53 bills enrolled and sent to the Governor's desk.
  - 42 signed.
  - 11 vetoed.





# What does this mean for CHSWC?

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# AB 365 (Schiavo) – The Justin Kropp Safety Act

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- **AED Requirement at Electrical Worksites:** Requires public utilities and their contractors to have an automatic external defibrillator (AED) at every worksite where two or more electrical workers are working on high-voltage lines (601 volts or higher).

# AB 841 (Patel) – State Fire Marshal: Battery Fires

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- AB 841 adds Section 13105.1 to the Health & Safety Code to require the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, to convene a working group to make recommendations for personal protective equipment (PPE) and decontamination protocols related to fighting lithium-ion battery fires.
- The working group shall include members of the State Board of Fire Services, academia, health and safety experts, a representative from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, and a labor organization representing the utility workforce
- Requires recommendations to be submitted to the Legislature by September 1, 2026.

# AB 845 (Arambula) – Employment: agricultural worker complaints

- Codifies Labor and Workforce Development Agency's (LWDA) Rural Strategic Engagement Program (RSEP) to better equip state labor agencies to handle and transmit farm worker complaints to the appropriate agency.
- Supports RSEP's "no wrong door" policy, ensuring that farmworkers receive help regardless of first contact agency.



# AB 1125 (Nguyen) – Workers' Compensation: Peace Officers

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- Expands Workers' Compensation Presumption: Extends the existing “heart trouble” presumption under Labor Code Section 3212.2 to include peace officers employed by the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH).



# AB 1181 (Haney) – Firefighters PPE

- Requires the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (OSHSB) to consider modifying safety orders for firefighter PPE and auxiliary firefighter PPE to eliminate hazardous substances like PFAS, fluoropolymers, and flame retardants by January 1, 2028
- Requires OSHSB to use scientific research to create a standard for firefighter PPE, using the 2025 NFPA 1970 standard as a floor, tailored to actual firefighter use.
- The bill would require manufacturers of firefighter PPE to certify that their products meet the new standards.
- Requires Cal/OSHA to provide a report on the progress toward implementation of the modified standards to the Governor and Legislature by July 1, 2026.



# AB 1293 (Wallis) – Workers' Compensation: Qualified Medical Evaluators

- Adds Section 4062.4 to the Labor Code.
- Requires the Administrative Director of the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) to develop and make available two forms:
  - A Medical Evaluation Request Form for communication with Qualified Medical Examiners (QMEs).
  - A template QME Medical-Legal Report Form.
- Directs DWC to adopt regulations implementing these forms by January 1, 2027

# AB 1398 (Valencia) – Workers' Compensation

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- Strengthens existing laws around financial disclosures in workers' compensation referrals by clarifying to whom such disclosures are made.
- Critical fix that restores the tools needed to combat fraud in the workers' compensation system.



# AB 1514 - Worker classification: employees and independent contractors: licensed manicurists: commercial fishers.

- Extends the ABC test exemption for commercial fishers working on American vessels from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2031.
- Reinstates the exemption for licensed estheticians, licensed electrologists, licensed manicurists, licensed barbers, and licensed cosmetologists from the ABC test, effective January 1, 2026, through January 1, 2029.
- Requires EDD and the Labor Commissioner's Office to report to the Legislature by June 1, 2026, on specified information regarding licensed manicurists to include allegations of misclassification or other violations of the Labor Code.

## **SB 8 (Ashby) – Peace officers Leaves of Absence**

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- Labor Code Section 4850 entitles specific employees to a leave of absence without loss of salary while disabled by injury or illness arising out and in the course of their duties. These benefits are tax-free.
- SB 8 amends Labor Code Section 4850(a)(8) to extend the leave of absence benefits to all Sacramento County Park Rangers.

# SB 20 (Menjivar) – Occupational safety artificial stone

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- Addresses epidemic of silicosis among workers in the artificial stone fabrication industry.
- Mandates wet methods for “high-exposure trigger tasks” and prohibits dry cutting of artificial stone to reduce respirable crystalline silica (RCS) exposure.
- New requirements to be implemented and enforced by DIR and Cal/OSHA.





# SB 230 (Laird) – Workers' Compensation: firefighters

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- Amends the Labor Code to include additional presumptive injuries such as meningitis, tuberculosis, cancer, and more, to privately employed active firefighting members of a contractor that provides fire protection to commercial airports, NASA installations, or Department of Defense installations, as specified.
- Applies to injuries occurring on or after January 1, 2026.

# SB 294 (Reyes) – The Workplace Know Your Rights Act

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- Requires employers to provide their employees, upon hire and annually thereafter, a written notice of workplace rights.
- The notice would include information on workers' compensation, immigration inspection and unfair immigration-related practices, union organization and concerted activity, constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement in the workplace, recent legal developments deemed necessary and material by the Labor Commissioner, and agencies that can enforce the rights described in the notice.
- The bill would require the Labor Commissioner's Office (LCO) to develop a template notice and videos for employees and employers in multiple languages by January 1.

# **SB 447 (Umberg) – Workers' Compensation: death benefits**

- Under existing law, if a peace officer or firefighter employed by a county, city, city and county, district, or other political subdivision of the state, or sheriff's special officer of the County of Orange dies in the line of duty, any surviving spouse and minor children up to the age of 21 years, will continue to be provided with health coverage that was in effect prior to the time of the death.
- SB 447 increases the age from 21 to 26 years of age for such dependents.

# SB 487 (Grayson) – Workers' Compensation

- SB 487 increases the total monetary recovery for peace officers and firefighters who are injured in the line of duty when a third party is responsible for the occurrence that led to the injury.
- Will only operate to apportion recovery rights in cases where the employee establishes that their total damages exceed the net recovery available after satisfaction of the employer's claim and the total liability insurance limits available are insufficient to fully compensate the employer's and employee's proven damages.

# SB 578 (Smallwood-Cuevas) – California Workplace Outreach Program

- Codifies the California Workplace Outreach Program (CWOP) until January 1, 2031.
- Issues competitive grants to qualified community-based organizations (CBOs) to deliver worker education and outreach across the State.
- Involves collaboration with CBOs and sister agencies and departments to deliver outreach and education on labor related issues such as wage theft, retaliation, paid leave, workplace safety, and workers' compensation.





# SB 627 (Wiener) – Law Enforcement: masks

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- No Secret Police Act
- SB 627 bans federal officers from wearing masks during enforcement duties.
- Allows for exceptions in narrowly defined circumstances such as undercover assignments, SWAT team operations, or genuine health and safety risks.
- U.S. Department of Justice sued California on November 17 to block SB 627 and SB 805 (No Vigilantes Act).

# SB 809 (Durazo) – Construction Trucking

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- Creates a tool for construction trucking employers to correct their misclassification of drivers by providing a limited opportunity for amnesty for those employers that come forward, correctly classify their drivers as employees, pay all wages, benefits, and taxes, and obtain workers' compensation insurance.
- Codifies existing law that a construction trucking driver who owns their own truck may still be considered an employee rather than an independent contractor and must receive reimbursement for their expenses, including mileage, upkeep, and depreciation, even if they receive separate checks for their hours worked and their expenses.

# SB 847 (Reyes) – Transfer of Real Property

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- Allows the DIR Director to make prima facie determinations that an illegally uninsured employer transferred property to evade Uninsured Employers' Benefits Trust Fund (UEBTF).

# SB 470 (Laird) – Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act

- Pushes the expiration date for certain teleconferencing provisions from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2030.
- Gov. Code section 11123.2
- Gov. Code section 11123.5



**The text of these signed bills can be found on the California Legislative Information website:**

<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>