

California Enacts New Annual Workplace Rights Notice Requirement

The newly enacted Workplace Know Your Rights Act, California Senate Bill (SB) 294, adds Labor Code sections 1550 through 1559 and imposes new notice, emergency contact and anti-retaliation obligations on California employers regarding certain workplace rights in the event an employee is arrested or detained at work.

On or before Feb. 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, employers must provide a stand-alone written notice to each current employee in the language and manner the employer normally uses to communicate employment-related information. The written notice must also be provided to each new employee upon hire and to an employee's authorized representatives. Employers may deliver the notice using any normal communication method that is reasonably expected to be received within one business day. The Labor Commissioner provides template notices that can be used that meet the requirements of this law. The template notice is currently available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), and will soon be available in additional languages.

Employers may use the template notice provided by the Labor Commissioner or create their own notice as long as it contains a description of workers' rights in each of the following seven areas:

1. Information about workers compensation
2. The right to notice of an I-9 inspection by immigration agencies
3. Protection against unfair immigration-related practices
4. Constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement in the workplace
5. Labor organizing rights



6. Description of new laws affecting workplace rights
7. Enforcement agencies that may enforce the underlying rights in the notice

Emergency Contact Designation

By March 30, 2026, and at the time of hire, employers must provide employees with the opportunity to name an emergency contact and to indicate whether the emergency contact should be notified if the employee is arrested or detained.

If an employee has instructed their employer that they would like their designated emergency contact to be notified in the event the employee is arrested or detained, the employer shall notify the designated emergency contact:

- If the employee is arrested or detained on their worksite
- If the arrest or detention occurs during work hours or during the performance of the employee's job duties but not on the worksite, and only if the employer has actual knowledge of the arrest or detention of the employee

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Anti-Retaliation and Enforcement

Employers may not retaliate against employees for exercising rights under SB 294. Specifically, employers are prohibited from discharging, threatening to discharge, demoting, suspending, or in any manner discriminating or retaliating against an employee for exercising or attempting to exercise their rights.

Enforcement authority rests with the California Labor Commissioner or public prosecutors. An employer that violates the requirements to notify a designated emergency contact shall be subject to a penalty of up to \$500 per day per employee, with a maximum penalty of \$10,000 per employee.

Recordkeeping

An employer should maintain records of compliance with the requirements, including the date that each written notice is provided or sent, for three years.

Next Action Steps for Employers

- Download from the Labor Commissioner the template notice titled "Workplace Know Your Rights" and determine whether to adopt it or to prepare a compliant alternative.
- Distribute the notice to all current employees by Feb. 1, 2026, using a communication method reasonably expected to be received within one business day.
- Incorporate the notice into onboarding processes for new hires.
- Collect emergency contact designation from employees by March 30, 2026.
- Develop a protocol, through education and training, for your managers, supervisors and Human Resources personnel to follow if/when it becomes necessary to notify a designated emergency contact to ensure compliance and also to respond to employee questions.
- Maintain compliance records as part of overall employment records management.

SB 294 creates new compliance responsibilities that require prompt employer attention. Employers should act now to ensure timely and accurate compliance with all notice and emergency contact obligations. Loeb & Loeb can assist with crafting legally compliant notices or implementing procedures required under SB 294.

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