

RMS End of Week Update 10/2/2026



Governor Hochul Issues Executive Order Regarding Cornell Case

Governor Hochul released the following statement:

“Newly released information continues to raise serious questions about the investigation conducted by the Cornell Police Department and the decision by the Tompkins County District Attorney not to prosecute an alleged sexual assault on Cornell University's campus in October 2024. This has, in turn, undercut my faith, and the public's faith, in the District Attorney's ability to effectively investigate and prosecute the case at this time.

For this reason, I have issued an executive order appointing Attorney General James as special prosecutor in this case. As special prosecutor, the Attorney General will investigate this incident and, if warranted, prosecute any offenses arising from that investigation and present evidence to a grand jury.

The young woman at the center of this case deserves to know that every fact will be examined and justice pursued. This action will ensure that the matter is fully and thoroughly investigated without conflict or bias, and handled independently with the rigor that this matter demands.”

To view the Executive Order please click [here](#).

To view the full press release please click [here](#).

Speaker Heastie Forms Working Group To Examine NY's Sexual Assault Statutes

Earlier this week New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie announced the formation of an Assembly working group to examine issues and perspectives surrounding New York's sexual assault statutes.

"The allegations being reported out of Cornell University are truly horrifying. We want to do everything we can to ensure victims of sexual assault see justice served," said Speaker Heastie. "This working group includes a broad cross-section of experience and viewpoints, and I am confident they will thoughtfully consider how best to move forward so that New York's laws are as strong as possible."

The working group includes Assemblymembers:

Harry B. Bronson

Catalina Cruz

Landon Dais

Jeffrey Dinowitz

Pamela Hunter

Alicia L. Hyndman

Chantel Jackson

Anna Kelles

Charles Lavine

Jennifer Lunsford

Karen McMahon

Gabriella A. Romero

Jo Anne Simon

Latrice Walker

The working group is tasked with identifying issues and developing legislative recommendations to the Speaker and the Majority Conference before the end of the year in order to allow for their full consideration in the 2027 legislative session.

To view the full press release please click [here](#).

2027 Minimum Wage Update

New York's minimum wage will not increase in January for the first time since 2024, when the state began tying it to the rate of inflation. But Gov. Kathy Hochul intends to pitch a proposal that would raise it anyway. The plan would require approval sometime

next year from the state Legislature, where the Democrat-led majorities in both chambers have historically supported increasing the state’s minimum wage.

Starting in 2027, NYS Labor Law requires the minimum wage annual increase to be based on the three-year moving average of the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the Northeast Region. The law includes an “off-ramp” that prevents an increase if specified economic conditions are not met.

The Department of Labor has announced that, due to the state’s recorded loss of thousands of private-sector jobs in the private education and hospitality sectors, the off-ramp has been triggered, and the minimum wage will be frozen at its current level for 2027.

The minimum salary level for employees considered exempt under the Executive and Administrative exemption in NYS is linked to the minimum wage. To be considered an employee exempt from the overtime provisions of New York State Labor Law, generally employees must pass three tests:

- Their duties – as defined by the law – must be Executive and Administrative in nature.
- They must be paid as an exempt employee – that is, their pay generally may not be changed week to week based on the quantity and quality of work.
- They must be paid a minimum weekly salary.

While the Federal government has a minimum salary level to be considered exempt, New York State has its own minimum salary level that is in excess of the federal minimum. The Federal minimum salary level is currently \$684 per week. This Federal minimum salary level is applicable in NYS to the Professional exemption.

The 2027 minimum wage and minimum salary levels for NY employers is below.

Minimum Wage

Location	Effective 1/1/2027
New York City Employers of all sizes	\$17.00/hour
Long Island/Westchester Employer of all sizes	\$17.00/hour
Remainder of the State Employers of all sizes	\$16.00/hour

Minimum Salary Level (Executive and Administrative Exempt Employees)

Location	Effective 1/1/2027
New York City Employers of all sizes	\$1,275/Week (\$66,300 annualized)

Long Island/Westchester Employer of all sizes	\$1,275/Week (\$66,300 annualized)
Remainder of the State Employers of all sizes	\$1,199.10/Week (\$62,353.20 annualized)

There is one exception: Home Health Aides minimum wage will increase 1/1/2027:

- \$20.00 per hour in New York City, Long Island, and Westchester County
- \$19.00 per hour in the rest of New York State

Home care minimum wage rates are adjusted for inflation but are capped at \$3.00 above the standard minimum wage.

Governor Hochul has announced that she will introduce legislation in the next legislative session (beginning in January 2027) to change the methodology and modify the “off-ramps.”

Governor Hochul is proposing a more flexible formula for when the agency has to determine if the minimum wage will be frozen. It would set a threshold that would instead require a 0.25% decline in the monthly rate of employment leading up to July to trigger a freeze the following year. That would be measured using the median rate from three different time periods — three, six and 12 months from July. That’s similar to the actual rates of job loss observed during economic recessions recorded by the state.

For more information please click [here](#).

New York's New Personnel Records Law

A recently signed New York law, which takes effect on November 8, 2026, significantly expands employee rights regarding personnel records and creates new obligations for employers. Employees will have the right to access their personnel files, receive notice when certain negative information is added to their records and submit responses for inclusion in those files.

Under the new law New York employers must allow current and former employees to access their personnel files up to two times per calendar year, and employers must produce the files within five business days. An employer must notify an employee within 10 days of placing any negative information in the employee’s personnel file. The employee has the right to respond, and that response will be included in the personnel file unless the employer and employee agree otherwise.

Importantly, the new law does not change existing collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) if they already provide employees the same level of access to personnel records as

the statute requires. Employers with unionized workforces should review their CBAs against the new statutory floor.

In her signing memo to the bill, Governor Hochul expressed concerns that the bill as drafted has “ambiguities that needed to be resolved to avoid uncertainty for both employers and employees, including clarifying that employers are not required to create a personnel file or produce new documents beyond the records they currently maintain, and that personnel files only include records or documents used to determine an employee’s qualifications for hiring, retention, promotion, transfer, additional compensation, or disciplinary action.” Governor Hochul indicated that she reached an agreement with the State Legislature to address such concerns in the upcoming legislative session.

For more information please click [here](#).

2027 Paid Family Leave Updates

Recently, the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) released its review of paid family leave utilization and the 2027 updates. In determining the community rate for 2026, DFS has reviewed claims, demographic, financial and other Paid Family Leave benefits data for calendar years 2019 - 2025 and for the first six months of 2026 for the Paid Family Leave program in New York, consistent with actuarial principles.

The 2027 PFL rate will be set at 0.452% of an employee’s wages each pay period up to and not to exceed an annual maximum employee contribution of \$451.81. The table below shows paid family leave information effective January 1, 2027 compared to 2026.

Year	2026	2027
Weekly Benefit (% of AWW)	67%	67%
Benefit Amount	12 weeks	12 weeks
NYS Average Weekly Wage	\$1,833.63	\$1,922.25
Maximum Weekly Benefit	\$1,228.53	\$1,287.91
Maximum Annual Contribution	\$411.91	\$451.81

To view the Paid Family Leave Updates for 2027 please click [here](#).

Helpful Links and Resources

[2026 RMS HMM End of Session Update](#)

[RMS Revenue and Tax Final Budget Table](#)

[RMS Health/Mental Hygiene Final Budget Table](#)

[FY 2027 Enacted Budget Financial Plan](#)

[Empire State Development Tariff Resource Guide](#)

[NYS COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#)

NYS COVID-19 Fatalities Tracker

Eliminating Distractions In Schools Resource

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Department of Financial Services information and resources

New York COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page

Department of Health

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

COVID-19 Guidance for Medicaid Providers

Office of Mental Health

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html>

OPWDD

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance>

State Education Department

<http://www.op.nysed.gov/COVID-19.html>

NYS Department of Labor

<https://dol.ny.gov/>