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# Minnesota House of Representatives

Kurt Daudt, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## New Laws Effective Jan. 1, 2018

*The following is a list of select new laws passed during the 2017 regular and special legislative sessions that take effect Jan. 1, 2018. The asterisk following the bill number denotes the language that became law. Summaries of all laws passed by the 2017 Legislature in regular and special sessions are available online from nonpartisan House Public Information Services at <http://www.house.mn/newlaws/#/search/2017>.*

### ELECTIONS

#### **Uniform election dates established**

The omnibus elections law calls for the establishment of five uniform dates throughout the year for local elections.

Effective Jan. 1, 2018, a special election in a city, town or school district must be held on one of the following dates:

- the second Tuesday in February;
- the second Tuesday in April;
- the second Tuesday in May;
- the second Tuesday in August (state primary date); or
- the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November (general election date).

A special election may only be held on a different date if it is held in response to an emergency or disaster.

School districts will be permitted to consolidate polling places if their election is a standalone one. The polling places must be designated polling places already in the district.

Rep. Kelly Fenton (R-Woodbury) and Sen. Mary Kiffmeyer (R-Big Lake) sponsor the law.  
HF729/SF514\*/CH92

### HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### **Insurance coverage extended to eye drop refills**

Health plans that cover prescription eye drops will need to cover refills earlier than the expiration of a 30- or 90-day supply.

Sponsored by Rep. Tony Albright (R-Prior Lake) and Sen. Karin Housley (R-St. Marys Point), the law takes effect for health plans offered, sold, issued or renewed on or after Jan. 1, 2018.

HF1203/SF997\*/CH47

### **Age-related hearing loss training to be allowed**

Age-related hearing loss can be an isolating experience and lead to depression, increased incidences of dementia, hospitalizations and falls. But the effects may be mitigated by well-informed staff trained to deal with communication barriers through a new law that takes effect Jan. 1, 2018.

Rep. Debra Kiel (R-Crookston) and Sen. Karin Housley (R-St. Marys Point) sponsor the law that will allow home care providers to include training about age-related hearing loss in the orientation they receive to help them interact more effectively with people who are hard of hearing in their care to improve the quality of their lives.

Home care workers will also be able to count training in age-related hearing loss toward their annual training requirements.

All staff performing direct home care services must undergo annual training that can address a range of topics, including maltreatment reporting, the home care bill of rights and infection control techniques.

HF952\*/SF818/CH51

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **New license plates to honor fallen officers**

Minnesota drivers will be able to honor law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty with special license plates beginning Jan. 1, 2018.

A new law, sponsored by Rep. Duane Quam (R-Byron) and Sen. Dave Senjem (R-Rochester), creates a special law enforcement memorial license plate for Minnesota motor vehicles. To obtain the plate, a vehicle owner will pay a \$10 plate fee and donate \$25 benefitting the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association. They are also required to contribute at least \$5 annually in subsequent years.

The Department of Public Safety is tasked with designing the plate, and vehicle owners will have to pay a \$5 fee to transfer the plate to another vehicle.

Plate-related donations will be directed to a new Minnesota law enforcement memorial account; those funds are appropriated to the department for administrative costs and distribution to the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association.

The \$10 plate fee will be allocated to the vehicle services operating account.

HF678\*/SF513/CH55

### **Truck weights and other license plate changes**

The omnibus transportation law passed during the special session adds motorized bicycles — or mopeds — to the list of vehicles for which a person can apply for disability license plates.

A new special license plate for retired law enforcement and a “Start Seeing Motorcycles” plate are provided for beginning Jan. 1, 2018. The law sets eligibility and provides for plate design and transfers. An annual donation to the motorcycle safety fund will be required for the motorcycle-awareness plates.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2018, a road authority may issue a special annual permit to exceed motor vehicle weight limits in order to haul road construction materials on six- and seven-axle vehicles. The law specifies permit fees, sets conditions and allocates permit revenue to a bridge inspection and signing account.

Rep. Paul Torkelson (R-Hanska) and Sen. Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson) sponsor the law.

SSHF3\*/SSSFnone/CH3