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Minnesota House of Representatives

Lisa Demuth, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Laws Effective Jan. 1, 2026

The following are select new laws passed during the 2025 regular and special sessions that take effect Jan. 1, 2026. The asterisk following the bill number denotes language that became law. Summaries of all laws passed by the 2025 Legislature are available online from nonpartisan House Public Information Services at www.house.mn.gov/newlaws/#/search/2025.

CIVIL LAW

Order for protection against financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult

The 2025 public safety and judiciary policy and finance law contains a provision that aims to better protect vulnerable adults from exploitation and scams.

Effective Jan. 1, 2026, "a petitioner may petition the court for an order for protection against financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult seeking injunctive relief and any other equitable remedy the court deems appropriate."

Per the law, filing fees are waived for both parties to the order. A court hearing must be held within 14 days of receiving the petition unless a temporary ex parte order is issued.

Relief may be provided if a court finds the vulnerable adult is in imminent danger of or is being financially exploited, there is a likelihood of irreparable harm and nonavailability of an adequate remedy, the threatened injury to the vulnerable adult outweighs the possible harm to the respondent, and an order protects the vulnerable adult's financial security.

Relief could include prohibiting direct or indirect contact with the vulnerable adult and freezing the vulnerable adult's assets and line of credit.

Rep. Paul Novotny (R-Elk River) and Sen. Ron Latz (DFL-St. Louis Park) are the sponsors.
HF2432*/SF1417/CH35

ELECTIONS

Absentee ballot, other changes

A person using the online application to request an absentee ballot will, effective Jan. 1, 2026, need to provide both a Minnesota driver's license or state ID card number and the last four digits of their Social Security Number, unless the applicant affirmatively certifies that they do not possess one of those numbers.

That is one provision in the 2025 state and local government and elections law sponsored by Rep. Ginny Klevorn (DFL-Plymouth) and Sen. Tou Xiong (DFL-Maplewood).

Also effective Jan. 1, 2026, a person or entity mailing an absentee ballot application or sample ballot must include the following statement in a way that is clearly visible when the mailing is opened: "This mailing is not an official election communication from a unit of government. This [absentee ballot application or sample ballot] has not been included at the request of a government official." If a sample ballot is enclosed, the statement must also include the following: "This is a sample ballot, not an official ballot. You cannot cast the enclosed sample ballot."

Other election-related provisions taking effect in the new year include:

- an affidavit of candidacy must include a phonetic spelling or pronunciation of the candidate's name or a certification that the candidate will use the applicable technology's default pronunciation;
- the secretary of state's office and county auditors must provide a public information list within five, rather than 10, business days of receiving a complete request accompanied by payment of the cost of reproduction;
- a candidate or their principal campaign committee must not solicit or accept any contributions or make any expenditures for inaugural event expenses or transition expenses except through the candidate's principal campaign committee or as provided through the statutes providing state resources for transition funds; and
- a candidate for constitutional or legislative office must report to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board the next business day when they make a contribution or loan to their own campaign committee that exceeds the contribution limit.

HF2783/SF3045*/CH39

EMPLOYMENT

Rest, meal break lengths specified

Effective Jan. 1, 2026, workers will be allowed "a rest break of at least 15 minutes or enough time to utilize the nearest convenient restroom, whichever is longer, within each four consecutive hours of work." Current law is "adequate time."

Additionally, at least a 30-minute meal break must be provided by employers for every six consecutive hours worked. The current requirement is "sufficient time to eat."

The provisions are in the 2025 jobs and economic development law sponsored by Rep. Dave Pinto (DFL-St. Paul) and Senate President Bobby Joe Champion (DFL-Mpls).

2025 Special Session: SSHF15/SSSF17*/CH6

Zero estimated exposure policy changes

Among a law that adopts recommendations from the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council is the strengthening of protections against insurance premium fraud in the construction industry.

Starting Jan. 1, 2026, applicants for zero-estimated exposure policies must attest to the accuracy of their statements with specific language, including that they "have no employees and an estimated exposure of zero."

Employers holding such policies must provide written notification and a copy of the policy to businesses they contract with, who must retain these documents for three years.

The law also clarifies the use of wrap-up policies covering multiple contractors and subcontractors working on a single project. The state shall approve policies for single projects valued at more than \$100 million that generate at least \$500,000 in workers' compensation premiums annually, provided project sponsors, contractors and subcontractors have not been convicted of insurance fraud in the recent past. This provision takes effect Jan. 1, 2026.

Rep. Dave Baker (R-Willmar) and Sen. Jennifer McEwen (DFL-Duluth) sponsor the law.
HF3228*/SF3407/CH27

ENVIRONMENT

Increased watercraft surcharge and water-use permit fees, no 'shotgun zones'

Sponsored by Rep. Josh Heintzeman (R-Nisswa) and Sen. Fong Hawj (DFL-St. Paul), the 2025 environment and natural resources law increases the annual watercraft surcharge assessed to fund invasive species control from the current \$10.60 to between \$14 and \$62, depending on boat size, type and use.

For example, the surcharge for a watercraft used by a nonprofit corporation for teaching boat and water safety will be \$14; a sailboat no more than 19 feet in length will be \$20; a personal watercraft, including one offered for lease or rent, will be \$25; watercraft owned by a dealer under a dealer's license will be \$50.

Also taking effect on Jan. 1, 2026, are increased water-use permit processing fees and water-use permit application fees. These fees are credited to the water management account in the natural resources fund.

And, a "shotgun zone" that restricted deer hunters to using only shotguns, muzzleloaders, and handguns in the southern portion of the state is repealed. After Jan. 1, 2026, hunters anywhere in the state can use all legal firearms for deer hunting during the regular firearms season unless a county in the former shotgun zone adopts an ordinance restricting their use.

2025 Special Session: SSHF8/SSSF3*/SSCH1