



# Legislation 2023

Public Acts affecting the  
Connecticut Department of Labor

December 2023

---

***These legislative summaries are meant for informational purposes only and do not contain the exact language of the legislation.***

***Department of Labor staff wish to acknowledge the Connecticut General Assembly's Office of Legislative Research for its summaries of 2023 Public Acts used in the preparation of this document.***



# Contents

<b>Commissioner’s Note</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Employee Rights and Individual Protections</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Trafficking In Persons Council .....	4
Judicial Branch Operations.....	4
Revising the State’s Antidiscrimination Statutes .....	4
Provisions to Implement the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025 .....	4
<b>Wage &amp; Workplace Standards</b> .....	<b>6</b>
The Mental, Physical, and Emotional Wellness of Children .....	6
Hydrogen Task Force.....	6
Stop Work Orders.....	6
Prevailing Wage.....	7
Provisions to Implement the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025 .....	7
Employment for Youth Life Guards and Amusement Park Pilot .....	8
<b>Workforce Development</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Tax Abatement for Certain Conservation Easements and Addressing Housing Affordability.....	9
“Apprentice” Prosecutor Program .....	9
Juvenile Justice .....	9
Provisions to Implement the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025 .....	10
Adding Members to the Governor’s Workforce Council.....	10
Business Reporting Requirements .....	11
Study to Promote Workforce Development .....	11
Educator Apprenticeship Program/Education Workforce Initiatives .....	11
Green Job Corps .....	12
Health and Wellness for Connecticut Residents. ....	12
<b>Opportunity &amp; Fairness</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Provisions to Implement the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025 .....	13
Resources and Support Services for Persons with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability.....	13
Municipal Veterans’ Services .....	13
<b>Modernizing State Agency Statutes and Functions</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Modifying and Repealing Obsolete Provisions and Statutes Relevant to the Labor Department .....	15
The Department of Consumer Protection’s Recommendations Regarding Licensing and Enforcement .....	15
Liability for False and Fraudulent Claims.....	15
<b>Other Public Acts</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Labor Department Data Breach Report .....	17
Provisions to Implement the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025 .....	17



## Commissioner's Note

Governor Lamont and his administration, in partnership with the General Assembly, have shepherded a solid and steady post-pandemic period of economic growth that has benefited employers and the workforce alike. In October 2023, Connecticut reached a hard-fought economic milestone and achieved full economic recovery from the COVID market losses. With total employment now at 100.4% of pre-pandemic job levels, the pandemic that pushed unemployment rolls to an unprecedented high of more than 392,000 weekly filers and cost Connecticut companies more than 289,000 jobs is banished to history.

While labor market data changes every month, at the time of this report, the state's economy is strong and stable with low unemployment, eight consecutive months of job growth, and many industries at or above pre-pandemic job levels. There are undoubtedly challenges in our future. Therefore, it is critical that the partnerships that shepherded us through the public health crisis remain intact and productive to ensure sustained recovery and future economic growth.

This report highlights the policy accomplishments during the 2023 session of the General Assembly. Thanks to Governor Lamont, our state agency partners, and the CT Legislature, we have established laws that protect and promote the interests of Connecticut employers and our workforce.

What's next? Working in partnership with government and non-government stakeholders to engage youth in career exploration and encourage young adults to participate in CT's workforce. We will do so by teaming with our Regional Workforce Development Boards, CT State Department of Education, CT Technical Education and Career System, CT State and others to promote Pre-Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship Programs, Dual Credit Opportunities and more. This work will strengthen our workforce pipelines to create and sustain a competitive edge in the global economy; dig into the barriers that prevent workforce participation; and address challenges facing employers who are trying to expand and grow but need the skilled workforce to do so. The Connecticut Department of Labor is ready for the work that lies ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Danté Bartolomeo".

Danté Bartolomeo  
Labor Commissioner

## Employee Rights and Individual Protections

### Public Act [23-20](#) AN ACT IMPLEMENTING ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND EXPANDING THE COMPOSITION OF THE TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS COUNCIL

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

This Public Act increases the Trafficking in Persons Council’s membership, of which the Labor Commissioner is a member, from 35 to 36 by adding the Department of Developmental Services Commissioner. Additionally, the Public Act expands protections for human trafficking victims by prohibiting hotel, motel, or similar lodging operators that offer or provide a room with sleeping accommodations from offering or giving a financial discount or benefit based on an (1) hourly rate or (2) occupancy period that is for 12 hours or less..

### Public Act [23-46](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUDICIAL BRANCH OPERATIONS, THE SHARING OF JUDICIAL BRANCH RECORDS AND THE AWARD OF DAMAGES IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS

Section 24 effective October 1, 2023

This Public Act allows a broader range of damages to be awarded when an employer illegally disciplines or discharges employees for exercising their First Amendment rights. The law generally prohibits employers from disciplining or discharging employees, or threatening to do so, for exercising their First Amendment rights under the U.S. Constitution, or similar rights under the Connecticut Constitution, if it does not substantially or materially interfere with their bona fide job performance or working relationship with their employer.

### Public Act [23-145](#) AN ACT REVISING THE STATE'S ANTIDISCRIMINATION STATUTES

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

This Public Act adds “age” to the list of protected classes in the state’s antidiscrimination laws. This change authorizes the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) to investigate claims of discrimination based on age and makes a violation generally a class A misdemeanor with a minimum \$1,000 fine (or less as determined by the court).

The legislature also redefined “sexual orientation” to mean a person’s identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are romantically, emotionally, or sexually attracted, including any identity that a person may have previously expressed or is perceived by another person to hold. This new definition specifically applies to antidiscrimination laws subject to enforcement by CHRO, as well as laws prohibiting discrimination in awarding agency, municipal public works, and quasi-public agency project contracts.

### Public Act [23-204](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

**MANDATORY NURSE OVERTIME IN HOSPITALS** - Section 55, Effective October 1, 2023

Similar to prior law, prohibits hospitals from requiring nurses to work overtime and from discriminating or retaliating against them for refusing to do so, with limited exceptions. Under existing law, the prohibition does not apply in the following situations: nurses participating in an ongoing surgical procedure, until it is completed; nurses working in critical care units, until they are relieved by another nurse starting a scheduled work shift; public health emergencies; institutional emergencies; and nurses covered by a collective bargaining agreement that addresses mandatory overtime.

This act provides that its provisions cannot be construed to alter or impair a collective bargaining agreement's term that place additional mandatory overtime restrictions or limitations or prohibit mandatory overtime for nurses covered by collective bargaining agreements that address mandatory overtime that are in effect prior to October 1, 2023, or for state employees, in effect prior to June 1, 2027.

***FIREFIGHTERS CANCER RELIEF BENEFITS*** - Sections 159-162, effective October 1, 2023, except the provisions on the Firefighters Cancer Relief Fund Advisory Committee and treasurer's report are effective upon passage.

New legislation requires that firefighters who have certain cancers and meet other specified criteria receive workers' compensation-like benefits and disability retirement benefits. The benefits must be paid by the municipality where the eligible firefighter is employed, to be later reimbursed to the municipality by the state's Firefighters Cancer Relief Account. Under existing law, unchanged by the act, firefighters who meet substantially similar criteria may also qualify for wage replacement benefits from the Firefighters' Cancer Relief Program, which is funded by the same account and administered by the Connecticut State Firefighters Association's Firefighters Cancer Relief Subcommittee. Under the act, a "firefighter" includes any uniformed member of a paid municipal, state, or volunteer fire department and local fire marshal, deputy fire marshal, fire investigator, fire inspector, and other classes of inspectors and investigators for whom the State Fire Marshal and the Codes and Standards Committee have jointly adopted minimum qualification standards.

## Wage & Workplace Standards

### Public Act [23-101](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS OF CHILDREN

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

This new law extends eligibility for paid sick leave to a service worker who is the parent or guardian of a child who is a victim of family violence or sexual assault, provided the service worker is not the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of the violence or assault. Additionally, this Public Act requires employers to allow service workers to use accrued paid sick leave for a “mental health wellness day” to attend to their emotional or psychological well-being. The law applies to specified service worker occupations covered by existing law (e.g., certain food, health care, hospitality, retail, and sanitation industry workers). Included in this Public Act is an expansion of the duties of the Task Force to Study Children’s Needs of which the Labor Commissioner is a member.

### Public Act [23-156](#) AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HYDROGEN TASK FORCE

Effective Date: July 1, 2023, except the requirement that DEEP seek federal funding which is effective upon passage.

This Public Act requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to develop and approve a hydrogen strategic plan, extends certain wage and workforce requirements to hydrogen projects, and requires DEEP to seek federal funding opportunities for projects that advance hydrogen in the state. The act requires DEEP’s strategic plan to prioritize the application of hydrogen produced from renewable energy to aviation, maritime shipping, ferry transportation, heavy-duty trucking, and high-temperature industrial processes. Under the act, starting January 1, 2025, hydrogen projects are “covered projects” subject to labor and workforce requirements under CGS § 31-53d. Among other things, these provisions require project developers to establish a workforce development program, which will give newly hired and existing employees the opportunity to develop skills that will enable them to qualify for higher paying jobs on a covered project (e.g., apprenticeship programs). Contractors and subcontractors of a covered project must pay each construction employee on the project at least the wages and benefits that the state’s prevailing wage law requires for the employee’s corresponding job classification in a public works project. Construction projects covered by a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) are exempt from this requirement if the PLA meets certain other criteria. Each operation, maintenance, and security worker employed in a building or facility built in a covered project must be paid at least the prevailing wage or the “standard wage,” including benefits, for the employee’s corresponding job classification.

### Public Act [23-162](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STOP WORK ORDERS

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

This Public Act broadened the Labor Commissioner’s authority to issue stop work orders to include instances when a contractor or subcontractor knowingly or willfully pays an employee less than the prevailing wage required on a public works project (including a municipal project). The new law also

increases the civil penalty for violating a stop work order from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for each day that an order is violated and fine for hindering an investigation of complaints about the prevailing wage, nonpayment of wages, or a failure to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage, from \$150-\$250, to at least \$1,000.

Public Act [23-175](#) AN ACT AMENDING CODIFICATION OF PREVAILING WAGE CONTRACT RATES

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

This Public Act changes how residential construction rates are set on public works projects that meet the prevailing wage cost thresholds. Previously, the labor commissioner set the residential construction rates by adopting the applicable wage rates set by the federal labor secretary. Under the new law, the labor commissioner must instead use rates set in the collective bargaining agreements or understandings covering the same work in the same trade or occupation in the town where the project is located, as is current practice for the three other categories of public building projects (building, heavy, and highway).

Public Act [23-204](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

**TAX INCENTIVES FOR GROCERY STORES IN FOOD DESERTS**- Section 156-158, Effective Date: October 1, 2023

New legislation authorizes municipalities to adopt an ordinance to abate property taxes partially or fully on new grocery stores established in food deserts for the assessment years beginning on October 1, 2023, and October 1, 2024. Under the act, a "grocery store" is a retail facility at which at least 90% of its square footage is used to display and sell food products, of which at least 20% is used to display and sell fresh produce, dairy, and meat products, and that is constructed, rehabilitated, remodeled, or refurbished following the prevailing wage standard for the same work in the same trade or occupation in the town in which the project is undertaken. Under the act, any grocery store larger than 20,000 square feet must enter into a labor peace agreement with a bona fide labor organization (i.e., a labor union representing or seeking to represent grocery store workers) to qualify for the abatement. The act requires that the grocery store's business owner or operator agree to do the following under the labor peace agreement: maintain a neutral position on the labor organization's efforts to represent store employees, allow the labor organization to have access to store employees, and guarantee the labor organization the right to be recognized as the exclusive collective bargaining representative of the store's employees by showing that a majority of store workers have signed authorization cards indicating their preference for representation. In return, the bona fide labor organization must agree that its members will, for the duration of the agreement, refrain from picketing, work stoppages, boycotts, or other economic interference against the business.

**STANDARD WAGE LAW** - Section 419, effective date: October 1, 2023

The state's established standard wage law generally requires private contractors who perform building and property maintenance, property management, or food service work under state contracts to pay their employees a certain level of wages and benefits set by a statutorily defined process. This act



expands the law to cover contractors who provide security services under these contracts; specifies that each pay period in which an employee is paid less than the required standard wage rate is a separate violation (subject to a \$2,500 to \$5,000 fine under existing law); and requires covered contractors, for the duration of a covered contract, to annually (a) contact the labor commissioner by September 1 to get the applicable standard wage and (b) make any necessary adjustments by October 1. The act also adds notice posting requirements and modifies the law's enforcement provisions, such as by allowing aggrieved employees to bring a civil action in Superior Court instead of bringing a complaint to the labor commissioner. The covered contractors must pay their covered employees a standard rate of wages which includes the "prevailing rate of wages" and the "prevailing rate of benefits" received by most employees doing the same type of work under a union contract that covers the largest number of hourly nonsupervisory employees (but at least 500) in Hartford County. If there is no prevailing rate of benefits, then the contractor must either pay a 30% surcharge to cover the cost of any health, welfare, and retirement benefits or pay employees an extra 30% directly if the contractor does not provide benefits. Benefits covered by the surcharge do not include those required by federal, state, or local law.

Public Act [23-183](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN MINORS AS YOUTH CAMP STAFF MEMBERS AND LIFEGUARDS

Effective Date: Upon passage.

This law expressly allows 15-year-olds to work as staff members or lifeguards at youth camps, under adult supervision and subject to existing restrictions on those other jobs which 14- and 15-year-olds may work. This new law also requires the labor commissioner, by July 1, 2023, to implement a pilot program authorizing one amusement establishment in the state to employ 15-year-olds in nonhazardous positions, including as cashiers in ticket booths or food concession stands. The law generally requires that employers of 15-year-olds working as youth camp or amusement establishment staff members or lifeguards obtain a certificate documenting the employee's age (i.e., "working papers").

## Workforce Development

### Public Act [23-207](#) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TAX ABATEMENT FOR CERTAIN CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND ADDRESSING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY FOR RESIDENTS IN THE STATE

Section 17: Effective October 1, 2023, Sections 28-35: most provisions Effective June 1, 2024

This Public Act statutorily establishes the Office of Responsible Growth within the Office of Policy and Management's (OPM) Intergovernmental Policy Division and makes it the successor agency to the office of the same name established by executive order in 2006. Among other things, the act makes the office responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information to help the ongoing development of responsible growth goals for the governor. The act also establishes various state and local financial incentives for individuals and businesses investing in and developing rental units set aside for designated workforce populations. Under the act, the designated workforce population may include volunteer firefighters, teachers, police officers, emergency medical personnel, and any other professions working in the town where the project is located.

### Public Act [23-55](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECRUITMENT OF LAW SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR APPRENTICE PROSECUTOR POSITIONS

Effective Date: Upon passage

This act authorizes the Criminal Justice Commission, within available appropriations, to interview and appoint as an "apprentice prosecutor" any student from an accredited law school who is within five months of graduation and is a certified legal intern. Under the act, a student who the commission appoints as an apprentice prosecutor advances to the position of deputy assistant state's attorney upon admission to the Connecticut bar, which must occur within one year after graduating law school. This creates an exception to existing law by guaranteeing appointment upon bar passage (CGS § 51-278a(a)).

### Public Act [23-188](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE

Effective Date: Sections 2 and 3, effective upon passage

This Public Act expands the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) membership, of which the Labor Commissioner is a member, by adding five new members. The CT General Assembly established the JJPOC in 2014 to evaluate policies related to the Juvenile Justice system. The CT Department of Labor is a member of the JJPOC given that the agency is a foundational partner in CT's Workforce Development system and as such collaborates with a multitude of state agency partners and various CT organizations to provide workforce development programming to a variety of jobseekers, which include Justice Involved (JI) youth. By November 1, 2023, this Public Act also requires various state agencies (i.e., Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Corrections (DOC), and State Department of Education (SDE)) in consultation with designated JJPOC subcommittees, to develop a (1) reentry success plan for youth released from DOC and the Judicial Department's facilities and (2) program to successfully reintegrate them into their communities. The plan must incorporate restorative and transformative justice principles, include a quality assurance framework, and consider reentry models and best practices around the country.

Public Act [23-204](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

***PROJECT LONGEVITY INITIATIVE EXPANSION - Section 56, Effective July 1, 2023***

The “Project Longevity Initiative” is a comprehensive, community-based initiative to reduce gun violence in the state’s cities. A new law expands this initiative by making its goal to reduce gun violence in all the state’s municipalities, not only its cities, and requiring its implementation in Norwich and New London in addition to Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. Such plan shall, at a minimum, consider how to provide clients served by the Project Longevity Initiative with access to courses of instruction and apprentice programs provided by, but not limited to, a college, a university, a community college or the Technical Education and Career System.

***PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION - Section 64, Effective July 1, 2023***

Changes the membership and appointing authorities of the Planning Commission for Higher Education; requires the commission to update the strategic master plan for higher education. By law, the Planning Commission for Higher Education develops and ensures implementation of a strategic master plan for higher education that must address degree attainment, the number of people entering the workforce, and the achievement gap. The Labor Commissioner currently serves as an ex-officio nonvoting member on the commission. The act also adds the Chief Workforce Officer to the commission, increasing the total number of ex-officio, nonvoting members from 13 to 14. Prior law required the plan to establish numerical goals on degree attainment, workforce, and the achievement gap for 2020 and 2025. The act instead requires the updated plan to assess progress toward these goals established under the 2015 plan and revise or establish these goals for the years 2025 and 2030. Among other things, in updating the plan, the commission may also consider increasing financial aid in workforce shortage areas for first-generation students, in addition to minority students as required under prior law. Prior law required the commission to annually report to various legislative committees and the governor on the plan’s implementation and progress towards the goals specified in the plan. The act delays this reporting requirement by making the next report due January 1, 2026.

***APPRENTICESHIP REPORTING DATA - Section 163, Effective January 1, 2024***

Requires apprenticeship program sponsors to annually give the CT Department of Labor (CTDOL) certain information about the extent to which apprentices are successfully completing their program. The act requires each person sponsoring a CTDOL registered apprenticeship program as of, or on or after July 1, 2024, to annually submit certain information about their program to CTDOL.

Public Act [23-93](#) AN ACT ADDING CERTAIN MEMBERS TO THE GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

This act expands the Governor’s Workforce Council by adding the following three new gubernatorially appointed members: a residential construction expert, a regional-vocational school representative, and a regional agriculture science and technology school representative.

Public Act 23-4 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN BUSINESS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS  
Effective upon passage

The legislature enacted a law eliminating certain expanded Department of Labor (DOL) employer data reporting requirements that had yet to take effect and instead authorizing employers to include several additional data points in their quarterly wage reports. The eliminated requirements included various new data points for each employee (e.g., demographic information). By law, employers subject to the state's unemployment law must submit quarterly wage reports to DOL with information about each employee receiving wages, including name, Social Security number, and the amount of wages paid during the calendar quarter. Beginning with the third quarter of 2026, the new legislation allows these employers to include in their quarterly wage reports data for each employee on occupation and hours worked and the employer's business mailing address zip code.

Special Act 23-11 AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY TO PROMOTE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT USING THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM AS A MODEL

Effective upon passage

This special act established a working group to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding the feasibility of leveraging the H1-B visa cap exemption process to fill high-value job openings and promote workforce development, using the Global Entrepreneur In Residence program as a model. The Labor Commissioner or her designee serves as a member.

Public Act 23-167 AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSPARENCY IN EDUCATION  
Effective Date: Various (see below)

- This new law requires the State Department of Education (SDE), by January 1, 2024, to establish a pre-apprenticeship grant program for boards of education that include DOL-registered pre-apprenticeship programs in their high school curriculum. It also requires SDE, starting by January 1, 2025, to annually report to the Education Committee on the program, including the amount of grants awarded and types of pre-apprenticeship programs students completed during the prior year. (Effective July 1, 2023)
- The new law also requires SDE to establish, beginning with FY 24, an educator apprenticeship initiative to enable students in teacher preparation programs to gain paid classroom teaching experience. The law applies to students enrolled in educator preparation programs, teacher residency programs, or ARC programs. SDE must seek certification of the program with DOL. (Effective July 1, 2023)
- This law also specifically allows school boards to partner with local businesses to provide aerospace and aviation apprenticeship training programs to students. It also requires the Connecticut Technical Education Career System executive director to convene a working group to determine the feasibility, cost, and plan to develop an aerospace advanced manufacturing high school. The executive director must report the working group's conclusions and

recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2025. (Effective July 1, 2023, except that the provision convening the working group takes effect upon passage.)

- Another part of P.A. 23-167 was in response to the initial recommendations of the School Indoor Air Quality Working Group, of which CTDOL is a member. This law requires school districts to conduct more frequent indoor air quality inspections and requires the inspection reports to be submitted to DAS to post on its website. Beginning January 1, 2024, the inspections must be done every year, rather than every three years. (Effective upon passage)

Public Act [23-61](#) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN JOBS CORPS PROGRAM

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

This new law requires the Connecticut Clean Economy Council (led by OWS), consulting with CTDOL and other state agencies, to develop a workforce training plan for green jobs (i.e., those using green technology) to accomplish the state's greenhouse gas emissions goals. Among other things, the plan must include the following: development of work-based learning programs for green jobs with workforce shortages; development of certificate and degree programs related to the green technology industry at technical education and career schools and higher education institutions; and identification of available public or private funding to develop these programs and provide grants to apprentices and students.

Public Act [23-97](#) AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS

Section 38 effective upon passage

Section 38 requires the Education Commissioner, in consultation with the DPH and Labor Commissioners, to study the feasibility of creating an interdistrict magnet school program to educate and train students interested in health care professions. This must include pathways for students to graduate with a certification, license, or registration that allows them to practice in a health care field and complete a curriculum designed to prepare them for pre-medicine or nursing higher education programs. By February 1, 2024, the education commissioner must report on the study to the Public Health Committee.

## Opportunity & Fairness

Public Act [23-204](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

**STATE-CONTRACTED PROVIDERS FOR IDD SERVICES** - Section 288, Effective upon passage

Authorizes state-contracted providers who received rate increases in FYs 22-23 for wage and benefit increases for employees providing services to people with intellectual disability to use these funds in FY 23 for wage increases for certain intermediate care facility employees.

Public Act [23-137](#) AN ACT CONCERNING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH AN INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Effective Date: Section 2 effective upon passage. Section 11 effective July 1, 2023

- Section 2 requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary, in consultation with certain officials, including the Department of Labor, Aging and Disability Services, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Department of Revenue Services commissioners to; identify and analyze existing employment assistance programs for people with disabilities, including IDD, and the capacity and demand for them; recommend financial incentives for businesses to employ a greater number of these people; and create a workforce plan that incentivizes businesses to have training programs, offer modified interviews, and reserve market-rate, full-time jobs. Under the act, the OPM secretary must report his findings and recommendations by January 1, 2025, to the Appropriations; Commerce; Finance, Revenue and Bonding; Human Services; Labor; and Public Health committees.
- Section 11 of the act requires the Office of Workforce Strategy's Chief Workforce Officer (CWO) to establish a Human Services Career Pipeline program to ensure enough trained providers are available to serve the needs of residents who are elderly or have IDD, physical disabilities, cognitive impairment, or mental illness ("human services providers"). The CWO must do this by July 1, 2024, and in consultation with Aging and Disability Services, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Labor, Department of Public Health, and Department of Social Services commissioners; the Governor's Workforce Council; Office of Higher Education executive director; Council on Developmental Disabilities; Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council; and regional workforce development boards.

Public Act [23-34](#) AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL VETERANS' SERVICES

Effective Date: July 1, 2021

The act requires at least two veteran service officers (VSO) in the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Advocacy and Assistance (OAA) to be responsible for overseeing and supporting municipalities' compliance with municipal veterans' representative program requirements in addition to their other duties under existing law. The act generally applies the responsibilities in prior law to all advisory

committees, directors, and representatives beginning October 1, 2023. Under the act, they must do the following: help veterans and their dependents get services and benefits they are entitled to, including by cooperating with national, state, local, and private providers; help coordinate public and private facilities' activities for veterans' reemployment, education, rehabilitation, and adjustment to peacetime living; encourage and coordinate vocational training services for veterans; coordinate with veterans organizations as practicable; be available to veterans in person, by phone, or by email for a minimum number of hours per week set by the municipality; and file a monthly report with the municipality that includes the names of those helped, services or referrals provided, and any other information the municipality requires.

## Modernizing State Agency Statutes and Functions

### Public Act [23-117](#) AN ACT CONCERNING MODIFICATION OF AND REPEALING OBSOLETE PROVISIONS AND STATUTES RELEVANT TO THE LABOR DEPARTMENT

Effective upon passage

This Public Act repeals various laws related to the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL). It repeals a requirement that the Labor Commissioner annually, by November 15, submit to the Education, Higher Education and Workforce Advancement, and Labor and Public Employees committees information about economic trends, occupational information, and emerging workforce trends for the next 10 years. Additionally, the Public Act repeals the law establishing the Individual Development Account (IDA) Program within CTDOL and requiring the department to provide matching funds for the participants. Additionally, the Public Act repeals several laws relating to CTDOL's enforcement authority that generally are obsolete or covered by other laws. For example, it repeals a law setting a minimum standard for worker bathroom accommodations at certain tobacco farms and another that addresses reporting serious accidents in workplaces, which are covered under the Connecticut Occupational Health and Safety Act (CONN-OSHA) or federal OSHA.

### Public Act [23-99](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT

Effective upon passage

This new law increases civil penalties for violations of various licensing laws (e.g., engaging in work without the appropriate trade license), generally capping the applicable civil penalty at \$3,000 per violation. The new law also gives the DCP commissioner new civil enforcement options for situations in which employers offer apprenticeships without registering with DOL's apprenticeship program or do not verify that an apprentice is registered with DOL.

### Public Act [23-129](#) AN ACT CONCERNING LIABILITY FOR FALSE AND FRAUDULENT CLAIMS

Effective July 1, 2023

This act expands the scope of the state False Claims Act by applying it to most state programs and benefits. It does so by removing provisions in prior law that limited it to state-administered health and human services programs and making conforming changes. The act excludes from the False Claims Act's scope claims, records, or statements made under any tax law administered by the state or one of its political subdivisions. Separately, the act eliminates a provision in prior law that made a False Claims Act violator liable for investigation costs and requires that the attorney general's False Claims Act investigations be within available appropriations. It also prohibits the state, when it is a defendant in a civil action, an arbitration, or another civil proceeding, from asserting a counterclaim, set-off, or defense alleging a False Claims Act violation. By law, the False Claims Act allows the attorney general or a person initiating the action (generally referred to as a whistleblower or relator) to bring an action against violators. It allows whistleblowers to share in the damages recovered because of the lawsuit. The attorney general or whistleblower must prove all essential elements of the cause of action, including damages, by a preponderance of the evidence. The False Claims Act's remedies are not exclusive and are in addition to other remedies provided under federal, state, and common law. As under existing law, anyone who violates the False Claims Act is generally liable to the state for: a civil penalty that is



periodically adjusted for inflation in accordance with federal law (e.g., a penalty from \$13,508 to \$27,018 for violations assessed after January 30, 2023); treble damages; and prosecution costs of the violation. (The act removes liability for investigation costs; see above.) Liability is joint and several for any violation committed by two or more individuals or entities.

## Other Public Acts

Special Act [23-3](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE LABOR DEPARTMENT AND DATA BREACHES  
Effective upon passage

This Special Act mandates the Labor Commissioner to conduct a study on data breaches and false unemployment claims at the Labor Department. The Labor Commissioner must submit the study to the Labor and Public Employees Committee by January 1, 2024.

Public Act [23-204](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

***BACKGROUND CHECKS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES*** - Sections 100-106, effective upon passage

Requires the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to conduct background checks for certain agencies and positions in addition to the existing requirement for the employing state agencies. Under a 2019 executive order that centralized human resources for most state agencies (Executive Order No. 2), DAS currently performs these functions on these agencies' behalf. Under the act, the DAS commissioner must conduct background checks for any agency applicants or transfers that have exposure to federal tax information, if DAS provides HR services for the employing agency (the act additionally expands this requirement to all agency contractors and subcontractors, including applicable employees).

***RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM REIMBURSEMENT*** - Section 112, effective upon passage

The act eliminates (1) an October 1, 2023, deadline for the Connecticut Retirement Security Program to reimburse the General Fund for any money spent from it to administer the program and (2) a requirement that the reimbursement also cover any costs paid from the General Fund to compensate covered employees. The act instead requires that the reimbursement follow a plan established and agreed upon by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary and state comptroller.

***TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE (TFA) ELIGIBILITY AND BENEFITS*** - Sections 264-270, effective April 1, 2024, except the asset limit and income disregard provisions are effective upon passage

The act makes several changes to Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), the state's cash assistance program for low-income families administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS). Principally, including extending the program's time limit from 21 to 36 months, modifying the criteria for time limit extensions, statutorily raising the asset limit, and disregarding income for certain households.