

PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES
175 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2146
Fax: 651-297-8135
800-657-3550



Minnesota House of Representatives

Kurt Daudt, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: Dec. 12, 2016
Contact: Lee Ann Schutz
651-296-0337
leeann.schutz@house.mn

New Laws Take Effect Jan. 1, 2017

The following are selected new laws passed during the 2016 legislative session that take effect Jan. 1, 2017. The asterisk following the bill number denotes the language that became law. Summaries of all laws passed by the 2016 Legislature are available from nonpartisan House Public Information Services at <http://www.house.mn/newlaws/#/search/2016>.

ELECTIONS

Presidential primary to replace caucus election

Minnesota will change from a caucus to a primary election system during the next presidential election. A primary will allow all-day voting rather than voters coming together at a specific time on precinct caucus night.

The state's presidential primary will be held the first Tuesday in March during a presidential election year, such as March 3, 2020, or on a different date if agreed to by the major party chairs.

Precinct caucuses may also continue, if the parties choose to hold them. The primary election for other federal, state and local offices will continue to be held in August.

The new law is sponsored by Rep. Tim Sanders (R-Blaine) and Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope).

When voting in the presidential primary, voters will be required to certify their agreement with the party in whose primary they choose to vote. This declaration, and the party that the voter chooses to vote for, will be recorded and available in the public record.

HF3549/SF2985*/CH162

EMPLOYMENT

Workers' Compensation Advisory Council ideas to be law

Suggested changes put forward by the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council became law Aug. 1, 2016. But health care providers and insurers were given until Jan. 1, 2017, to comply with the requirement to electronically submit medical records and reports along with a medical bill.

The new law clarifies the process for attorneys claiming payment of legal fees in worker's compensation cases and eliminates the bond requirement for those appealing a decision made by the Minnesota Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Tony Albright (R-Prior Lake) and Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL-Austin).

HF2478*/SF2398/CH110

Workers' compensation insurance companies' retention limits to change

Insurance companies that provide workers' compensation insurance to employers can select a retention limit (similar to a deductible) that the insurance company must pay in benefits before the Workers' Compensation Reinsurance Association will begin covering the insurance company's losses.

The new law changes the low retention limit and adds a "jumbo" retention limit as the highest level of retention. The retention limits can be adjusted in the future by the board of the Workers' Compensation Reinsurance Association, subject to approval of the Department of Labor and Industry commissioner.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Tony Albright (R-Prior Lake) and Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL-Austin).
HF2994*/SF2740/CH91

INSURANCE

Life insurance reserves to be in sync with uniform national act

A new law will require life insurance companies to use a principle-based method to determine the amount of money they must hold in reserve.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Joe Hoppe (R-Chaska) and Sen. Vicki Jensen (DFL-Owatonna).

The language has been adopted by 43 states, representing 76 percent of the insurance premiums in the U.S. This means that, after the National Association of Insurance Commissioners evaluates the states' laws, the uniform act will become effective Jan. 1, 2017. However, there are issues with the valuation manual that provides specific valuation instructions to the insurance companies.

The association is currently making changes to the valuation manual, and there will be a three-year implementation period during which insurers may choose to use this new methodology.

HF3384*/SF3230/CH178