

Insights: Alerts

Illinois Employers Now Must Pay Employees for Jury Service

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Written by Jeralyn H. Baran

New Illinois legislation imposes an immediate pay obligation on covered employers, requiring them to compensate employees at their regular rate of pay for time spent serving on a jury.

On July 31, 2026, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker signed [HB 4844](#) into law, amending the Illinois Jury Act and the Illinois Jury Commission Act to require certain employers to pay employees for time spent on jury duty. The new law applies to Illinois employers with more than 25 employees and will take effective on January 1, 2027.

For covered employers, this change transforms jury service from a job-protected leave obligation into a paid leave requirement. Employers should review their payroll practices, leave policies, and manager training now to ensure compliance.

Key Takeaways

- Covered Illinois employers must pay employees their regular rate of pay for time spent serving on a jury.
- The law applies to Illinois employers with more than 25 employees.
- The new requirement takes effect on January 1, 2027.
- Existing Illinois law continues to protect employees from retaliation based on jury service.
- Employees may bring a private right of action for violations and may recover attorneys' fees.

What Changed?

Before HB 4844, Illinois law already required employers to permit employees to take leave to serve on a jury. HB 4844 adds a new compensation requirement: covered employers must now pay employees at their regular rate of pay for time spent performing jury service.

This amendment increases the compliance burden for covered Illinois employers and may require prompt updates to payroll administration and leave policies.

Existing Jury Service Protections Remain in Place

The new payment requirement does not replace Illinois's existing jury service protections. Those provisions remain in effect.

Among other things:

- Employees must provide notice of required jury service within 10 days of the issuance of the jury summons.
- Employers may not discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce employees because of jury service or absences related to jury service.
- Employees have a private right of action for violations and may recover attorneys' fees.

Why This Matters?

With the new law taking effective on January 1, 2027, covered employers should act quickly to ensure that jury service absences are handled consistently with the new statutory requirement. In addition to the direct wage impact, noncompliance may create litigation risk under the statute's enforcement provisions.

What Employers Should Do Now?

- Review payroll practices to ensure employees serving on a jury are paid at their regular rate of pay.
- Update employee handbooks, leave policies, and internal guidance addressing jury duty.
- Train supervisors and human resources personnel on the law's requirements and anti-retaliation protections.
- Confirm internal procedures for receiving jury summons notices and documenting jury service leave. Assess whether multi-state leave administration practices need to be adjusted to account for this Illinois-specific requirement.

Conclusion

Illinois has expanded employee protections relating to jury service by requiring covered employers to pay employees their regular rate of pay while serving on a jury. Employers with more than 25 employees should promptly review and update their policies and practices to reduce compliance risk.

If you have questions about the new Illinois jury duty pay requirement or would like assistance updating your policies and practices, please contact Kilpatrick's [Labor and Employment Team](#).

Related People



Jeralyn H. Baran

t 312.606.3217

jbaran@ktslaw.com