



CLEAN TIMES

~ Textile Care Professionals ~

October 2015

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November Ballot Issues

Most Ohio business organizations are supporting Issue 1 (Redistricting) and 2 (Prohibiting constitutional monopolies), but opposing Issue 3 which would Allow over 21 individuals to possess 9 oz. of marijuana and create a monopoly for small group of investors.

Ohio's Minimum Wage Will Remain Unchanged for 2016

The wage rates for 2016 will continue to be \$8.10 per hour for non-tipped employees and \$4.05 per hour for tipped employees. The minimum wage will apply to employees of businesses with annual gross receipts of more than \$297,000 per year.

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The constitutional amendment passed by Ohio voters in November 2006 states that Ohio's minimum wage shall increase on Jan.1 of each year by the rate of inflation. The state minimum wage is tied to the federally determined Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) for urban wage earners and clerical workers for the 12-month period prior to September. This national CPI- W index declined 0.3 percent over the 12-month-period from Sept. 1, 2014 to Aug. 31, 2015. The constitutional amendment states that the minimum wage level shall increase at the rate of inflation, therefore, a decrease in the CPI-W index means that the Ohio minimum wage will remain the same as in the previous year.

For employees at smaller companies with annual gross receipts of \$297,000 or less per year after Jan. 1, 2016 and for 14- and 15-year-olds, the state minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. For these employees, the state wage is tied to the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour which requires an act of Congress and the president's signature to change.

Ohio Legislation Would Intrude on Drycleaner Management

OCA is monitoring several bills that would infringe on a dry cleaners right to manage his/her business with limited government interference.

Senate Bill 79 is "ban the box" legislation that would prohibit both public and private employers from asking applicants whether they have been convicted of a felony on job applications. Banning the box would adversely impact hiring efficiency, and potentially exposes dry cleaners to increased administrative costs and liability.

Another proposal, **House Bill 56** would ban the box only for public sector jobs... which could be a precursor to banning the box in the public sector.

Further bringing these issues to the forefront, Gov. John Kasich recently issued a policy, effective June 1, 2015, removing questions requiring applicants to disclose prior felony and other criminal convictions from the Ohio Civil Service Application. Again, this is public sector ban the box, but the trend it signifies is concerning.

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House Bill 170 restricts how employers who require flu shots manage their employees who refuse the shot. HB 170 represents an unnecessary government intrusion and could adversely affect the health and safety of private workplaces.

The House is considering 6 Health Insurance Mandates which, if passed, would *increase group health insurance premiums*. Of the six, two are sponsored by Republicans and are being seriously considered:

HB 248: Coverage of "abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic drugs... like methodone.

HB 350: Coverage of autistic screening, diagnosis and treatment.

Budget Bill (HB64) Drafting Error Being Fixed by SB208

The final version of HB64 inadvertently turned an intended tax cut into a temporary tax increase for some small dry cleaners under the state's small business exemption. Lawmakers created a 3 percent, flat-rate tax for small business income above \$250,000, the threshold for the small business exemption. But in 2015, taxpayers can only exempt 75 percent of income up to \$250,000, and application of the 3 percent rate on the last 25 percent could represent a tax increase versus application of the usual graduated rates.

Sen. Bill Beagle's (R-Tipp City) SB208 fixes this error by applying the graduated rates to the final 25 percent of income up to \$250,000. The problem goes away in 2016, when a full 100 percent of small business income up to \$250,000 is deductible.

Beagle says that the bill also should simplify the filing process, meaning there'll be greater participation among business owners in claiming the deduction, leading to greater tax relief.

Changes to Ohio's BWC Billing

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) has changed its billing practices. Under the new system, which became effective July 1 for private employers, businesses will be billed PRIOR to receiving coverage instead of the current practice of billing employers in arrears.

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In order to prevent double billing during this transition, the BWC will offer a premium credit to those employers in an active status. These employers are eligible to receive a CREDIT for eight months of workers' compensation coverage.

Again, to be eligible for this credit, employers must be in active status by July 1 and:

- Report unreported payroll for currently lapsed payroll periods
- Pay any outstanding premium, late fees and penalties for assessed premium, or;
- Request a payment plan for any premium amounts that cannot be paid in full.

BWC is offering free prospective billing webinars and seminars to answer questions. For more information, visit their [website](#), call 800-644-6292 or send an email to bwcprospectivebilling@bwc.state.oh.us.

Guidelines to Prevent Workplace Slips, Trips and Falls

It's probably happened to most of us. That momentary lapse of inattention thinking about a personal problem or distracted by an activity that ends in a slip, trip or fall. It can lead to a variety of regrettable events ranging from a simple bruised shin to an extremely serious injury.

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