



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

New state laws now in effect for 2018

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. January 3, 2018

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Queens, NY (January 3, 2018) As the clock ticked over to 2018 on January 1st, several new state laws took effect to raise the minimum wage, provide tax relief for middle-income families, and provide support for people who need time off from work to care for new babies or seriously ill family members, according to NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.

“Although we must continue to analyze the ultimate effects of federal tax reform on individuals and families in New York, which may be significant, I am glad my colleagues and I took steps on the state level to help people keep a little more money in their pockets and balance important work and family responsibilities,” **said Addabbo**. “We may have a tough economic year coming up, but I will continue to push for policies that help New Yorkers manage their personal finances and care for their loved ones.”

January marks the first phase of the “Middle Class Tax Reduction Program” enacted as part of the 2016-2017 State Budget. The program begins to reduce the personal income tax (PIT) for New Yorkers earning under \$300,000, and will cut these taxes statewide by \$4.2 billion annually when fully implemented by 2025. In the end, tax rates will fall to 5.5 percent for those earning under \$150,000 and to six percent for taxpayers with higher incomes up to \$300,000. Many small businesses are also expected to benefit from the PIT reductions.

A general state minimum wage increase that has been phasing in over several years has now raised hourly pay from \$11 to \$13 for most New York City workers at this end of the pay scale. Minimum wage earners working for City businesses with 10 or fewer employees will see an increase from \$10.50 to \$12 per hour.

“This hike in the minimum wage will help more New Yorkers afford basic life necessities and keep their household budgets in balance,” **said Addabbo**, a member of the Senate Labor Committee. “With high housing, food and other costs in New York City, this small increase in hourly wages will make a big difference in the lives of many low income workers and families.”

A new Paid Family Leave (PFL) program, an initiative long championed by Addabbo, will now enable workers who need time out of the labor force to bond with new babies, care for seriously ill loved ones, or deal with the challenges of military deployment to take eight weeks of paid leave from their jobs. Funded through small employee payroll deductions, PFL will provide 12 weeks of job-protected paid leave at 67 percent of a worker’s weekly wage when it is fully phased in by 2021. For 2018, employees will receive 50 percent of their weekly wages.

“I was a long-time sponsor of legislation creating a very similar PFL policy in New York State,” **said Addabbo**. “I was very pleased when this vital family-friendly program was adopted as part of the 2016-2017 State Budget.” Workers and employers interested in more information about PFL may visit www.ny.gov/paidfamilyleave or call the helpline at 1-844-337-6303.

Some of the other new state laws of 2018 are:

- S683/A2183 – Creates an online listing of publicly funded or registered afterschool and school age child care programs.
- S946A/A1105B – Waives NYS application fees for all honorably discharged veterans,
- S2911A/A3198A (Co-sponsored by Addabbo) – Authorizes additional paid leave for certain employees who served in combat needing health related services.
- S4491/A6601 – Grants a personal income tax deduction for the amount of any student loan that is discharged as the result of the death or permanent and total disability of the borrower.
- S5664B/A2409B - Authorizes the Commissioners of Education and Agriculture to establish voluntary guidelines for the donation of excess, unused, edible food from educational institutions' meal programs to voluntary food assistance programs, of which Addabbo was a co-sponsor.

“As the 2018 NYS legislative session kicks off this week, I look forward to continuing to serve my constituents in the State Senate and working to support their interests throughout upcoming state budget negotiations and discussions on other vital public policy issues,” **said Addabbo**. “I hope local residents will contact me to express their thoughts and concerns about state actions in the days, weeks and months to come.”