

Federal & Illinois Employment Laws Compliance Reference Guide

Employment law is one of the most closely regulated areas in today's workplace. Each year, new rules and compliance requirements emerge at the federal, state, and local levels, increasing the complexity organizations must manage.

This **Field Guide to Federal and Illinois Employment Laws** provides a concise overview of the key regulations that could impact your organization. While it does not cover every possible scenario or requirement, it serves as a practical starting point to understand the main legal considerations for employers and organizational leaders.

Please note, this Field Guide is for informational purposes only and is not legal advice. It should not replace consultation with your attorney. Many laws include specific exceptions based on factors like industry, employer type, or length of employment not fully detailed here. For guidance on applying these rules to your organization, we recommend contacting HR or seeking legal counsel to navigate these often-complex issues effectively.

Federal & Illinois Employment Laws Compliance Reference Guide

What applies to us:

1+ Employees 5+ Employees 15+ Employees 20+ Employees 50+ Employees

What applies to us:

Federal State City of Chicago County

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State Local	Notes/Action Items
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	Minimum wage, overtime, recordkeeping	1+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Wage Payment & Collection Act	Timely payment of wages, lawful deductions, reimbursements	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State Local	Notes/Action Items
Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act	Accrued paid leave usable for any purpose	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Equal Pay Act (Federal & Illinois)	Pay equity, pay transparency	1+ Employees	Federal & Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Human Rights Act (Limited)	Disability, pregnancy, sexual harassment protections	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA)	Consent and safeguards for biometric data	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Employee Sick Leave Act	Use of earned sick leave for family care	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Workers' Compensation Act	Coverage for work-related injuries	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State	Notes/Action Items
Local				
OSHA / IL OSHA	Workplace safety requirements	1+ Employees	Federal &	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois				
Immigration Reform and Control Act	I-9 employment eligibility verification	1+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act	Limits on monitoring and disclosures	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Whistleblower Act	Protection from retaliation	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Jury Duty, Voting, Witness Leave	Protected civic leave rights	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Cannabis Laws	Medical & recreational cannabis protections	1+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State Local	Notes/Action Items
Chicago / Cook County Ordinances	Local wage, paid leave, scheduling laws	1+ Employees	Chicago/IL	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Personnel Record Review Act	Employee access to personnel files	5+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act	Break time and private lactation space	5+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Toxic Substances Disclosure Act	Notice of hazardous substances	5+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Title VII (Civil Rights Act)	Anti-discrimination & harassment	15+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Reasonable accommodations	15+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA)	Pregnancy-related protections	15+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

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Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)	Pregnancy accommodations	15+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)	Genetic data protections	15+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Human Rights Act (Full Coverage)	Expanded protected classes	15+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Ban the Box Act	Criminal history inquiry restrictions	15+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
COBRA	Continuation of group health coverage	20+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)	Age 40+ protections	20+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State Local	Notes/Action Items
Older Workers Benefit Protection Act (OWBPA)	Waivers & disclosures	20+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	Job-protected unpaid leave	50+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Affordable Care Act (ACA)	Employer shared responsibility	50+ Employees	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Illinois Family Bereavement Leave Act	Bereavement-related leave	50+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Employee Blood & Organ Donation Leave Act	Protected donation leave	50+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
WARN Act (Federal & Illinois)	Layoff & plant closing notices	50+ Employees	Federal & Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Law / Requirement	Scope / Key Requirements	Applicability (Employer Size)	Federal / State Local	Notes/Action Items
School Visitation Rights Act	School activity leave	50+ Employees	Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

HR Best Practices	Purpose
Written policies aligned to law	Risk mitigation
Annual training & acknowledgments	Compliance & documentation
Annual payroll, classification & leave audits	Wage/hour protection
Document accommodation & leave decisions ADA/FMLA defensibility	
Centralized personnel records	Recordkeeping compliance

Chicago & Cook County Employment Law Addendum

This addendum supplements the Federal & Illinois Employment Laws Client Guide and applies to employers with employees working in the City of Chicago and/or Cook County.

City of Chicago Requirements

- Chicago Human Rights Ordinance – Expanded protected classes and anti-discrimination requirements
- Chicago Paid Leave and Paid Sick and Safe Leave Ordinance – Accrual, use, and carryover requirements
- Chicago Minimum Wage Ordinance – City-specific minimum wage rates
- Chicago Sexual Harassment Ordinance – Annual sexual harassment and bystander training
- Chicago Fair Workweek Ordinance (where applicable)
- Chicago Ban the Box Ordinance – Restrictions on criminal background inquiries

Cook County Requirements

- Cook County Human Rights Ordinance – Expanded protected classes
- Cook County Paid Leave Ordinance – Accrual and usage standards
- Cook County Minimum Wage Ordinance – County wage rates

- Cook County Paid Sick Leave alignment considerations

Important Note: Where local, state, and federal laws overlap, employers must comply with the provision that is most generous to the employee.

Top Compliance Priorities for 2026:

Priority Action Items:

Need help navigating these compliance priorities? Evolve HR & Leadership Consulting is here to provide guidance, practical solutions, and support tailored to your organization. Stay ahead of compliance in 2026! Reach out to Evolve HR & Leadership Consulting for tailored guidance and solutions.

Evolve HR & Leadership Consulting: Email: support@evolvehrleadershipconsulting.com

Website: evolvehrleadershipconsulting.com