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## Labor & Employment

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During the 2017 legislative session, the General Assembly considered measures related to professional licensing and regulation, wage law transparency, workers' compensation insurance, and workforce development programs.

### Professional Licensing and Regulation

*House Bill 17-1196* required the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) to promulgate rules related to the number of credit hours or contact hours required to become licensed as a barber or cosmetologist. The rules must not require more than 50 credit hours that meet specific requirements, or more than 1,500 contact hours.

*Senate Bill 17-189* allows third party vendors approved by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation to take fingerprints for applicants applying for certain licenses that require a fingerprint-based criminal history record check.

*Senate Bill 17-218* continued the licensing of landscape architects and the Board of Landscape Architects in DORA through September 1, 2028.

*Senate Bill 17-247* waived the continuing education requirement for the first renewal or reinstatement of an electrician's license for electricians who successfully completed a licensing examination. The bill also repealed an exemption allowing certified electricians who have not passed the written residential wireman's examination to inspect one- to

four-family dwellings as state electrical inspectors.

### Wage Law Transparency

*House Bill 17-1021* added a requirement that the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) treat all final determinations of violations of Colorado wage and hour law by an employer as public records and subject to release under the Colorado Open Records Act, unless determined to be a trade secret by the division director.

*House Bill 17-1269* provided wage transparency protections to all employees in the state by removing the exemption that was in place for employers that are exempt from the federal National Labor Relations Act.

### Workers' Compensation Insurance

Under current law, all employers in the state are required to maintain workers' compensation insurance coverage to provide employees who are injured on the job with reasonable and necessary medical treatment and partial wage replacement while recovering. The Colorado Uninsured Employer Act, created by *House Bill 17-1119*, established the Uninsured Employer Board and the Colorado Uninsured Employer Fund in CDLE. The purpose of the act is to pay claims to workers injured while employed by employers who have failed to maintain the required workers' compensation insurance.

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## Labor & Employment (cont'd)

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### Workforce Development Programs

The Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment, and Key Training Grant Program (WORK program), originally created by *House Bill 15-1276*, provides grants to organizations that offer workplace training skills. *House Bill 17-1357* extended the WORK program by one year through FY 2018-19. The bill also allowed CDLE to use an expedited application acceptance and review process under certain circumstances.

*Senate Bill 17-292* created the Employment Opportunities with Wages Program in the Department of Human Services (DHS). Participants in the employment program include individuals receiving public assistance through the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. The employment program is intended to assist participants in attaining living wage, permanent jobs by funding evidence-based subsidized wage opportunities.

*Senate Bill 17-022*, which was postponed indefinitely by the Senate Finance Committee, would have required the Department of Local Affairs to coordinate the provision of nonmonetary resources to rural communities that have experienced, or expect to experience, a significant economic event, such as a plant closure or layoffs, for the purpose of assisting with job retention and creation.