The San Diego Union-Tribune

The newest California workplace laws

The latest laws include mandatory opioid overdose response training, expanded bereavement leave, limits on AI

By **Dan Eaton** PUBLISHED: October 5, 2026 at 6:00 AM PDT

Last week, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed or vetoed the last of the bills on his desk that were passed in the most recent session of the state legislature. Here are some that pertain to the workforce.

Mandatory workplace opioid overdose response training

Assembly Bill 2150 will require employers to provide training to employees required to be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and in using naloxone to increase the rate of opioid overdose reversals. Assemblymember Matt Haney, D-San Francisco, sponsored the measure.

According to a news release issued by Haney's office, "The new law will strengthen intervention, reduce response time, and increase the number of lives saved. The opioid overdose epidemic continues to impact Californians, including young people. Many overdoses occur in public settings where CPR-certified staff are already present. By equipping staff with the tools to identify an overdose and administer naloxone at the scene, AB 2150 will help ensure people can respond quickly when every minute matters."

Required training

New California Health and Safety Code section 1797.197b will apply to any employer operating in California that requires employees to be CPR-certified. No employer is exempt solely based on "existing clinical staffing levels or internal medication administration policies."

The training must be separate from the existing CPR training curriculum and must include how to:

- Recognize signs of an opioid overdose.
- Respond to signs of overdose, including emergency procedures.

- Administer naloxone or other opioid antagonist approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The state Emergency Medical Services Authority must approve the training program. Approved programs include those offered by the American Red Cross, a co-sponsor of the measure, and the American Heart Association.

Notwithstanding the requirement that the opioid response training be "separate from" existing CPR training, the measure says an employee "who has completed CPR certification, first aid certification, or other training" the Emergency Medical Services Authority determines includes training meeting or exceeding the minimum standards of this measure will satisfy the training requirement if the employer maintains documentation of the qualifying program or certification.

That provision responds to criticism of an earlier draft of the measure by the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts. The group argued that a standalone naloxone-use training requirement for all employees would make it harder to recruit seasonal and part-time staff, particularly lifeguards.

The required training is "for educational and preparedness purposes only and does not create an independent duty, authorization, or expectation for any employee to administer naloxone."

The measure repeatedly underscores that the requirements are not meant to discourage employers from adopting more expansive training on how to respond to opioid overdoses in the workplace.

Expanded bereavement leave

Since 2023, California employers with five or more employees have had to offer employees with at least 30 days on the job up to five days of unpaid job-protected bereavement leave for the death of certain family members. Next year, under Senate Bill 1149 signed by the governor, covered employees will be entitled to take that leave for a "designated person" not within the definition of "family member" under the current statute.

The statute defines "designated person" as "any individual related to the employee by blood or whose association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship." An employee similarly has the right to job-protected leave to care for an identically defined "designated person" under the California Family Rights Act.

No Robo Bosses Act

On Sept. 30, the governor signed Senate Bill 947 into law and other measures related to the use of AI by employers. As explained in an earlier column, the new law will restrict employers' use of automated decision systems in making termination or disciplinary decisions starting July 1, 2027.

Virtually all public and private employers will be prohibited from relying exclusively on ADS to make disciplinary or termination decisions.

An employer that relies "primarily on ADS output" to make such a decision will have to have a human corroborate the decision using the information ADS reviewed in forming its recommendation or conclusion, including personnel files.

If the employer cannot corroborate the ADS's bottom line, or the human reviewer concludes the ADS output is inaccurate or misleading, the employer will be unable to use the ADS-generated report in making the termination or disciplinary decision.

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