

Law and Policy Group

# Global Legislative Update

By Stephanie Rosseau and Fiona Webster  
February 2022



# In this document

Mercer’s Global Legislative Update covers legal developments affecting retirement, health, executive rewards, talent, diversity and inclusion, and other HR programs that affect local and/or expatriate employees. Links to developments with upcoming effective dates covered in past updates are also included to remind employers of impending deadlines. These icons indicate whether employer action is required.



Employer action required



Potential implications for employers



Developments to monitor

Please note: Mercer is not a law firm and therefore cannot provide legal advice. Please consult legal counsel before taking any actions based on the commentary and recommendations in this report.

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## Highlights

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Americas	
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### US

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[Salary information will be required in New York City job postings](#)  
[Telehealth amended to ban higher cost sharing in Ohio](#)  
[Public option targeted for 2025 in Oregon](#)  
[Implementation of long-term care program delayed in Washington](#)  
[Covered lives assessment reduced for 2022 in Washington](#)  
[2022 health expenditure rate for hotel employers posted in Seattle, Washington](#)

Asia Pacific	
Australia	<a href="#">Consumer remediation guidance proposed</a>
China	<a href="#">New workplace gender equality measures proposed</a> <a href="#">US bans Chinese products made with forced labor</a>
India	<a href="#">Remuneration guidelines for CEOs and directors of private insurance companies revised</a>
Philippines	<a href="#">Protections for workers' rest hours proposed</a>
South Korea	<a href="#">Paid parental leave enhanced</a> <a href="#">Private-sector employers now entitled to more holidays</a> <a href="#">More employees able to participate in workplace-based National Pension Scheme</a> <a href="#">Expansion of reduced working hours scheme for family care</a>
Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA)	
Belgium	<a href="#">Expatriate taxation scheme revised</a>
France	<a href="#">New gender quotas for senior execs, management teams imposed</a>
Ireland	<a href="#">Legal framework to request remote working proposed</a>
Italy	<a href="#">Budget includes measures to boost jobs</a>
Luxembourg	<a href="#">Social security salary amounts revised</a>
Norway	<a href="#">Companies face new human rights due diligence, reporting</a>
Portugal	<a href="#">Bereavement law expanded</a>
Romania	<a href="#">Minimum wage rate increased</a>
Spain	<a href="#">Labor reforms enacted</a>
Turkey	<a href="#">Monthly minimum wage increased</a> <a href="#">Pension changes enacted</a>

## EMEA (continued)

### United Arab Emirates (UAE)

[Extensive private sector labor reforms enacted](#)

### United Kingdom (UK)


[Employers to notify employees about national insurance increase, health/social care levy](#)


[Certain 'right to work' checks to be verified online](#)

[Regulations on 'stronger nudge' to Pensions Wise guidance announced](#)

[Consultation on large employers' disability reporting invites input](#)

# 2 Global

Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic	
Status	 Ongoing initiatives
Development	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <b>Countries address workplace issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic</b> Since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 12 Mar 2020, employers continue to address the severe impact on work practices and adjust employment and benefit policies accordingly. Countries have enacted legislation and provided regulatory guidance related to workforce protections, leave and layoff procedures, employment subsidies, and changes to existing enforcement procedures. To help multinational employers address worksite, economic and associated travel issues, Mercer is providing analysis on workforce and investment implications and compiling information from organizations, government websites, news articles, and other resources.
Resources	<a href="#">Roundup: COVID-19 resources for employers</a> , regularly updated; <a href="#">Navigating coronavirus</a> , regularly updated

Remote working	
Status	 Ongoing initiatives
Development	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <b>Countries address remote-working issues</b> Remote working has become more of a permanent feature for many employees and employers because of COVID-19 measures introduced in many countries. Remote working poses challenges and considerations for employers when devising or adjusting policies. Issues to consider include the definition of remote work, eligibility criteria, hybrid working arrangements, employee engagement and performance, cybersecurity, health and safety, the right to disconnect, possible relocation of employees to a different country or state, and the post-pandemic return to the workplace. Several jurisdictions have introduced remote-working legislative measures that clarify employer and employee requirements post- pandemic, and others are expected to follow suit. To help employers, Mercer is providing analysis and links to general information about ongoing remote-working rights and trends in some countries, including resources from Marsh McLennan, organizations, government websites, news articles and other parties.
Resources	<a href="#">Roundup: Employer resources on remote working rights/trends</a> , regularly updated



### 3

## Americas

#### Argentina (new)

**Status**  1 Feb 2022

**Development** [Career — Health](#)

#### Employers' contribution to occupational disease fund to increase

Employers' fixed sum contributions to the occupational disease trust fund (FFEP) will significantly increase on 1 Feb 2022 to AR\$100, up from AR\$49.98 per employee.

**Resources** [Resolution 794/2021](#) (Spanish) (Official Bulletin, 6 Dec 2021)

#### Argentina (previously covered, newly effective)

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** [Career](#)

#### Minimum wage rate increased


As of 1 Feb 2022, the minimum wage rate will be AR\$33,000. For mandatory life insurance, the revised insured amount (which is 5.5 times the minimum wage) will apply from 1 Mar 2022.


**Resources** [Resolution 11/2021](#) (Spanish) (Government)

#### Argentina (upcoming effective date)

**Development** [Career](#)

- [Remote working rights post COVID-19 pandemic clarified](#) — Key date: 90 days after pandemic ends

<b>Brazil (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>Minimum wage rates increased</b> The Brazilian government published increases to the monthly, daily and hourly minimum wage rates on 30 Dec 2021. Effective 1 Jan 2022, the monthly minimum wage increased to BRL 1,212 per month, up from BRL 1,100; the new daily rate is BRL 40.40, and the hourly rate is BRL 5.51. The increases are set out in Provisional Measure No. 1.091 that must be extended or converted into law within 60 days to remain in force.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Law</a> (Portuguese) (Government)

Canada — Manitoba	
Status	 Currently effective
Development	<b>Wealth</b> <b>Additional Pension Benefits Act reforms enacted</b> The remaining pension changes under Bill 8 took effect on 20 Dec 2021 — most of the changes had taken effect on 1 Oct 2021 and were an outcome of Manitoba’s pension consultation initiated in January 2018. Highlights of the recent changes include: A defined benefit (DB) pension plan administrator may set up a separate account within the pension fund as a solvency reserve account for employer contributions in respect of a solvency deficiency; new funding requirements apply to valuation filings with a valuation date on or after 20 Dec 2021; the permitted uses for available actual surpluses at valuation date are defined; and a new requirement that any plan amendment is noncompliant if it reduces the plan’s solvency ratio to less than 85%. The introduction of solvency reserve accounts brings Manitoba in line with several other Canadian jurisdictions (e.g., Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia,). The reform of Manitoba’s DB funding rules is similar to rules in several other Canadian jurisdictions (e.g., Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia).
Resources	<a href="mailto:jared.mickall@mercer.com">jared.mickall@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">Bill 8</a> (Government)


**Canada (previously covered, with upcoming effective dates)**

<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Revised pay equity transparency measures issued</a> — Key date: 2021 reporting period (1 Jun 2022)</li></ul> <b>Career — Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Right to disconnect policy mandated and other changes in Ontario</a> — Key date: 2 Jun 2022</li></ul>
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**Colombia (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>January 2022</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>Employers required to plant trees based on number of employees</b> A new sustainability measure requires medium and larger employers in Colombia to plant two trees per employee every year under the ecological restoration law (Law No. 2173, 30 Dec 2021). Local authorities will designate the type of trees and their location, and companies must develop a program and comply within one year.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="mailto:hernando.angulo@mercer.com">hernando.angulo@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">Law No. 2173 of 2021</a> (Spanish) (Government, 30 Dec 2021)


**Colombia (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career — Health**  
**Employees granted right to disconnect**  
Employees in Colombia now have the right to disconnect at the end of their working day, during vacation periods and other rest periods under measures included in Law No. 2191 of 2022. The law includes certain exceptions, including force majeure situations. Employers must implement a right to disconnect policy that guarantees employees' right to disconnect, and includes guidelines to address certain work situations (such as remote working); an employee grievance mechanism, and an internal procedure for resolving employee complaints and implementing any agreements. Noncompliance is viewed as workplace harassment under Law No. 1010 of 2006, and employers face sanctions between two and 10 times minimum wages, and payment of up to 50% of any resulting medical treatment.

**Resources** [hernando.angulo@mercer.com](mailto:hernando.angulo@mercer.com)  
[Law No. 2191 of 2022](#) (Spanish) (Government, January 2022)


**Colombia (new)**



<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health</b> <b>Leave granted to parents of terminally sick children</b> Parents and carers of minor children diagnosed with a terminal illness are entitled to 10 working days of paid leave under Law No. 2174 of 2021 — known as “Isaac’s law.” The leave can be taken flexibly or in a single block, subject to the employer’s agreement. Both parents are eligible for the leave, but cannot take it at the same time, and they must provide their employer with a sick leave certificate that includes the child’s clinical diagnosis and care requirements. The leave is paid for by Health Promotion Entities (EPS), but the Ministry of Health and Labour is expected to clarify how this will be implemented — either directly or through employers. In addition, parents can request to work from home if their job can be done remotely.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="mailto:hernando.angulo@mercer.com">hernando.angulo@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">Law No. 2174 of 2021</a> (Spanish) (Government, 30 Dec 2021)

**Colombia (previously covered, with upcoming effective dates)**

<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Maximum weekly working time reduced</a> — Key date: Beginning in 2023</li></ul>
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**Mexico (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <b>Increased UMA rates announced</b> Revised rates for Mexico’s Unit of Measurement and Update (UMA) — took effect on 1 Feb 2022. The new UMA rates are MXN\$96.22 (daily), MXN\$2,925.09 (monthly), and MXN\$35,101.08 (annual). The UMA is used as an economic reference for calculating payments, obligations and penalties owed to the government, including social security benefits.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Information on UMA</a> (INEGI)

<b>US (updated)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Effective dates vary</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>Roundup: Employer resources on minimum wage increases</b> In April 2021, President Biden signed an executive order requiring federal contractors to pay a \$15 hourly minimum wage to workers for new federal contract solicitations starting 30 Jan 2022. The Department of Labor (DOL) issued final implementation rules on 22 Nov 2021 and a field assistance bulletin in January 2022. In January 2021, President Biden also issued an executive order asking the director of the Office of Personnel Management to provide recommendations on promoting a \$15/hour minimum wage for federal employees. House and Senate Democrats also introduced the Raise the Wage Act of 2021 to progressively increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2025. Several states have already taken action to gradually increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour for most employees. To help employers prepare and address related issues, this roundup provides links to federal and state resources from organizations, government websites, third-party resources and news articles.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">GRIST</a> , 2 Feb 2021
<b>US (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>Guidance on \$15 minimum wage for federal contractors issued</b> The Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division has released a field assistance bulletin that provides guidance on the application of Executive Order 14026 — Establishing a Minimum Wage for Federal Contractors. The final rule was issued in November, and beginning 30 Jan 2022, workers performing work on or in connection with new covered federal contracts must receive a minimum wage of \$15/hour.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Field Assistance Bulletin</a> (Wage and Hour Division, 13 Jan 2022)

**US (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career — Health**  
**2022 penalties for health and welfare benefit plan violations issued**  
Employers violating Department of Labor (DOL) regulations — including employee benefit, wage and hour, mine safety, occupational safety and health, and workers' compensation rules — could face stiffer penalties in 2022, thanks to new inflation adjustments. The higher rates apply to penalties assessed after 15 Jan 2022, for violations occurring after 2 Nov 2015. DOL rarely assesses the maximum and often waives penalties entirely for failures due to reasonable cause. However, the penalty threat is an important enforcement and deterrent tool.

**Resources** [dorian.smith@mercer.com](mailto:dorian.smith@mercer.com) and [katharine.marshall@mercer.com](mailto:katharine.marshall@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 18 Jan 2022

**US (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Wealth**  
**DOL, PBGC announce retirement plan civil penalties for 2022**  
The Department of Labor and Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. have published their 2022 inflation-adjusted civil monetary penalties for retirement plans.

**Resources** [margaret.berger@mercer.com](mailto:margaret.berger@mercer.com) and [brian.keaney@mercer.com](mailto:brian.keaney@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 14 Jan 2022



<b>US/China (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Career</b></p> <p><b>US bans Chinese products made with forced labor</b></p> <p>The US’s Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, signed into law on 23 Dec 2021, bans companies from importing products from the Xinjiang region of China, including products manufactured using raw materials from that region. The US and several other countries (such as Canada and the UK) have alleged that products and raw materials — including cotton, chemicals, polysilicon and coal — are produced using Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Other measures in the act include a rebuttable presumption barring importation of all goods from the Xinjiang region.</p> <p>US government agencies will publish, in the first half of 2022, information and guidelines to guide companies’ due diligence procedures. The US’s Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force will develop a government strategy to prevent the importation of products made “wholly or in part with forced labor” in China; create lists to help companies ensure that barred entities, facilities and products have not entered their supply chains; and issue guidance to importers on due diligence, and supply chain tracing and management measures. The Department of State will compile a list of entities in China or affiliates that use or benefit from forced labor in the region, and foreign persons who act as agents for such entities in the importation of goods into the US.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (Legislature)</a>

## US

### Status

 **Beginning 1 Feb 2022**

### Development

#### Career

#### **New online portal for affirmative action program verification introduced**

Beginning 1 Feb 2022, covered federal contractors and subcontractors (contractors) may begin registering for access to the new affirmative action program (AAP) verification portal, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (OFCCP) recently announced. Contractors must use this portal to annually certify whether they have developed and maintained an AAP for each establishment and/or functional unit, as required. In addition, scheduled contractors can use the portal to submit their AAPs to OFCCP during compliance evaluations. On 31 Mar 2022, contractors will be able to use the portal's certification feature to certify their AAP compliance, and by 30 Jun 2022, existing contractors must certify whether they have developed and maintained an AAP for each establishment and/or functional unit. OFCCP says more information about registration and certification is forthcoming, and additional information, including Frequently Asked Questions, can be found on OFCCP's Contractor Portal Landing Page.

### Resources

[OFCCP's contractor portal](#) (OFCCP)

**US — States (updated)**

**Status**  **Effective dates vary**

**Development** **Career**  
**Roundup: Employer resources on states’ recent equal pay laws**  
The federal Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires that men and women in the same workplace receive equal pay for equal work. Since then, every state (except Mississippi) has enacted its own Equal Pay Act. In recent years, many states have taken further efforts to address equal pay, such as enacting laws that prohibit employers from asking job applicants about salary history, requiring disclosure of salary ranges and pay data, protecting employees who disclose their pay, expanding equal pay protections for characteristics other than sex, and broadening comparisons of work and pay. Stronger federal legislation — the Paycheck Fairness Act — was first introduced in 1997 but has failed to pass after numerous attempts — most recently in June 2021.  
This roundup primarily focuses on recent state legislative initiatives pertaining to salary history bans and salary range disclosure requirements that affect private-sector employers, and provides links to state resources from organizations, government websites, third-party resources and news articles. Certain cities have also taken action, but they are generally beyond the scope of this roundup.

**Resources** [Roundup: US employer resources on states’ recent equal pay laws, 26 Jan 2022](#)

**US — States, cities**

**Status**  **Effective dates vary**

**Development** **Health**  
**States update group health plan sponsor reporting obligations**  
Group health plan sponsors’ state reporting obligations have grown over the past few years. While ERISA continues to preempt certain state regulation of private employers’ group health plans, some state reporting requirements for group health plan sponsors have moved forward. Mercer reviews key state reporting mandates for group health plan sponsors and reflects recent changes.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com), [dorian.smith@mercer.com](mailto:dorian.smith@mercer.com), and [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 21 Jan 2022

**US — States (updated)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career — Health**  
**2022 state paid family and medical leave contributions and benefits update**  
As of January 2022, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Washington, and Washington, DC, mandate paid leave for an employee’s own health condition. Oregon and Colorado will begin similar programs in 2023. Except for Hawaii and Puerto Rico, these jurisdictions also require paid family leave for bonding with a new child, caring for a seriously ill or injured family member, and certain other purposes. Despite some common elements, differences in these mandates make compliance and administration particularly challenging for multistate employers.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com), [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com), and [katharine.marshall@mercer.com](mailto:katharine.marshall@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 19 Jan 2022


**US — States, cities**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career — Health**  
**States, cities tackle COVID-19 paid leave**  
To alleviate some of the economic strain on employees unable to work due to COVID-19, some state and local authorities have implemented new paid leave requirements. Other jurisdictions modified existing leave laws or benefit programs to accommodate employees’ needs during the pandemic. Mercer has provided brief summaries of the new state and local paid leave benefits, as well as guidance addressing how current paid leave benefits apply during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent OSHA ETS requirements.

**Resources** [katharine.marshall@mercer.com](mailto:katharine.marshall@mercer.com), [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com) and [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), regularly updated

**US — California (new)**

**Status**  **Proposal**

**Development** **Health**  
**Insulin coverage bill passes Senate**  
On 24 Jan 2022, the California Senate approved an insulin cost-sharing bill (SB 473) that would apply to fully insured medical plans located in California. The bill is now pending with the state Assembly. If enacted, the bill would cap cost sharing for insulin prescriptions to \$35 per dosage and prohibit application of a deductible for services related to managing or treating diabetes, including glucose monitors, insulin pumps and ketone urine test strips. These provisions would take effect for policy years starting in 2023. This coverage mandate does not have an exception for HSA-eligible high-deductible health plans, but IRS guidance from 2019 expanded the definition of “preventive care” to include several diabetes-related services.


**Resources** [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[S473](#) (Legislature)

**US — California (new)**

**Status**  **Proposal**

**Development** **Health**  
**Abortion coverage bill heads to Assembly**  
On 20 Jan 2022, the California Assembly Appropriations Committee approved an abortion coverage bill (SB 245) that would apply to fully insured medical plans located in California. The bill has already passed the Senate. If enacted, the bill would require plans to cover abortion and abortion-related services without cost sharing (such as deductibles, copayments and coinsurance), retroactively effective for policy years starting in 2022. Utilization management and review are also prohibited for these services. An HSA-eligible high-deductible plan may impose a deductible in accordance with federal law.

**Resources** [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[S245](#) (Legislature)

<b>US — California (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>31 Mar 2022</b>
<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Health</b></p> <p><b>1095 health coverage updated reporting date announced</b></p> <p>California has updated its reporting information page for health coverage payers in the state, giving applicable entities until 31 Mar 2022 to report to the California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) for the 2021 coverage year. However, penalties for failure to file will not begin to accrue until 31 May. The state is one of several requiring reporting by self-funded plan sponsors, health insurers and other entities that provide minimum essential coverage (MEC).</p> <p>Though the IRS has extended the 2022 federal deadline to provide individual statements until 2 Mar 2022, the state's 31 Jan 2022 due date has not been extended; the date is set by statute (Ca. Rev. § 61005(e)). However, the FTB also has previously indicated that California penalties for furnishing late statements to individuals won't apply. In addition, duplicative California statements aren't necessary if individuals have received the federal coverage statement (IRS Form 1095-B or 1095-C).</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p><a href="mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com">catherine.stamm@mercer.com</a></p> <p><a href="#">Report health insurance information</a> (Government)</p>

**US — Connecticut (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career — Health**


**Employers allowed to recoup missed PFML deductions**

Employers that missed deducting 2021 employee contributions for the state’s paid family and medical leave (PFML) program may recoup the missed amounts by deducting an additional 1% from employee wages (for a total of 1.5%) through 31 Mar 2022, according to a recent Connecticut Department of Labor notice. After 31 Mar 2022, employers may deduct only the statutory 0.5%.

The notice also clarifies how Connecticut employees may use PFML for COVID-19-related absences. A COVID-19 exposure, or even a diagnosis alone is not necessarily a serious health condition under PFML, so is not necessarily a qualifying reason for income replacement benefits. To qualify, an employee must meet a serious health condition standard that requires an overnight stay in a medical care facility, incapacitates the employee for more than three consecutive days and requires medical treatment, or results in or exacerbates a chronic conditions that causes occasional periods when the employee is incapacitated and requires healthcare provider treatment at least twice a year.


An eligible employee may receive PFML benefits to serve as a caregiver to a family member exposed to or diagnosed with COVID, but only if the family member’s healthcare provider certifies that the family member’s exposure/diagnosis satisfies the serious health condition standard.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com)  
[Notice](#) (Connecticut Paid Leave Authority, January 2022)

<b>US — New Jersey (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Plans in the state that are delivered, issued, executed or renewed on or after 1 Jan 2023</b>
<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Health</b></p> <p><b>Contraceptive coverage mandate expanded</b></p> <p>New Jersey revised a 2020 contraceptive mandate law, expanding the law to require up to 12 months (an increase from 6 months) of prescriptions for contraceptives, all at one time and at no cost to participants. S413 applies to fully insured plans located in the state that are delivered, issued, executed or renewed on or after 1 Jan 2023. As under the prior law, there remains a first-dollar coverage exception for HSA-eligible high-deductible health plans regarding male sterilization or male contraceptives. Previously, IRS transition relief allowed states to mandate first-dollar coverage for male sterilization or male contraceptives before the deductible is met, but that relief expired in 2020.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p><a href="mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com">catherine.stamm@mercer.com</a></p> <p><a href="#">S413</a> (Legislature) and <a href="#">Press release</a> (Governor's office, 13 Jan 2022)</p>



**US — New York (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Proposal</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Health</b> <b>Vaccine reimbursement rates proposed</b> A bill (AB227) filed in the New York Assembly on 5 Jan 2022 would require insured health plans issued in the state to reimburse any necessary vaccination (including COVID-19) costs according to a specific formula. Here is a summary of the calculation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current or most recently reported US Centers Disease Control and Prevention private sector cost, plus;</li><li>• A minimum of 21% added for shipping, handling and storage costs, plus;</li><li>• Total cost of administration of the vaccine, including the cost of supplies, data entry, counseling, inventory management and routine nursing activities based on the current year Medicare rates.</li></ul> The bill's author stated that the goal is to “promote maximum immunization” by requiring insurers to pay the “full cost of the vaccine and vaccine related expenses.” The bill was referred to committee and if enacted, the mandate would take effect on 1 Jan 2023.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com)  
[AB 227](#) (Legislature)

**US — New York (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

<b>Development</b>	<b>Health</b> <b>2022 HCRA covered-lives assessment rates announced</b> New York has posted its 2022 regional covered-lives assessment rates and percentage surcharges for graduate medical education (GME) under the state’s Health Care Reform Act (HCRA).The GME is one of two assessments HCRA imposes on health claim payors — including self-funded plans.
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**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com), [dorian.smith@mercer.com](mailto:dorian.smith@mercer.com) and [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 31 Jan 2022

## US — New York (new)

### Status



Proposal

### Development

#### Health

##### Drug formulary bill passes Assembly

The New York Assembly passed and sent a modified bill (SB 7767) back to the Senate that would prohibit fully insured medical plans based in New York from making certain formulary changes during a plan year. Impermissible changes would include, with limited exceptions:

- Removing a drug from a formulary
- Moving a drug to a higher cost tier
- Adding formulary restrictions during a plan year

The bill allows for some exceptions:


- Moving a drug to a higher cost tier if an AB-rated generic equivalent or interchangeable biological product is added at the same time or if those currently taking the drug continue with the same cost-sharing for the rest of the current plan year
- Removing a drug if the FDA determines it should be removed from the market

In addition, a plan must notify participants of removal of drugs from a formulary 90 days before the start of a new plan year. These provisions would take effect for policy years starting in 2023.

### Resources

[rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)

[S7767 \(Legislature\)](#)

US — New York City (new)	
Status	 15 May 2022
Development	<p><b>Career</b></p> <p><b>Salary information will be required in job postings</b></p> <p>Beginning 15 May 2022, New York City (NYC) employers with four or more employees will be required to include salary information when advertising for any position — under a new law (Int. No. 1208-B) that amends the NYC Human Rights Law (NYHRL). The NYC Council initially passed this mandate on 15 Dec 2021, and it became law on 15 Jan 2022 after it was returned unsigned by the mayor.</p> <p>Under the law, it will be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employment agency, employer, employee or agent thereof to advertise a job, promotion, or transfer opportunity without including the minimum and maximum salary for the position. The range for the listed maximum and minimum salary will extend from the lowest to the highest salary that the employer — in good faith — believes it will pay for the advertised job, promotion, or transfer. The law does not specify what is included in “salary” and whether the salary disclosure applies only to positions located within NYC, but the NYC Council’s summary of the law states that it applies to “any position located within New York City.” Temporary staffing firms are exempt from this legislation as they already provide this information after interviews in compliance with the NY State Wage Theft Prevention Act.</p> <p>The NYC Commission on Human Rights enforces NYCHRL violations and may impose civil penalties of up to \$125,000 for unlawful discriminatory practices. It is also authorized to develop implementation regulations, which will likely clarify the law’s application before it takes effect in May. In the interim, employers with positions in NYC should consider preparing to be transparent about pay in job postings.</p>
Resources	<p><a href="mailto:tauseef.rahmen@mercer.com">tauseef.rahmen@mercer.com</a></p> <p><a href="#">GRIST</a>, 28 Jan 2022</p>


**US — Ohio (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Health**  
**Telehealth amended to ban higher cost sharing**  
Insured health plans covering Ohio residents must reimburse telehealth providers for services otherwise covered under the plan. Legislation (HB 122) amending the state’s telehealth law also bans higher cost sharing for telehealth services. The law (§ 3902.30), effective for plans issued or renewed on or after 1 Jan 2021, requires health plans to cover telehealth services on the same basis and to the same extent that the plan provides coverage for the provision of in-person healthcare services. However, reimbursement for telehealth services does not have to be paid at the same rate as in-person services. The new provisions take effect 23 Mar 2022.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com)  
[HB 122](#) (Legislature)

**US — Oregon (previously covered, updated)**

**Status**  **Study**

**Development** **Health**  
**Public option targeted for 2025**  
The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) study set out a January 2025 date for implementing a public option that would involve enhancing the existing individual market. (Currently, Oregon has a state-based Health Insurance Marketplace that operates on [healthcare.gov](https://healthcare.gov).)  
According to the report, the public option would target the 6% of Oregonians that are uninsured. Highlights of the public option include:

- A focus on eliminating racial and ethnic health inequities
- Adoption of a coordinated-care model instead of carrier-based or state-administered models
- Ensuring coverage affordability (94%-98% actuarial value)
- Primary funding from an ACA Section 1332 waiver (modeled after Colorado's 2021 request)
- Adult dental coverage
- A cost growth limit of 3.4% per year

The report did not analyze the potential impact on employer-sponsored coverage.

**Resources** [rich.glass@mercer.com](mailto:rich.glass@mercer.com)  
[Oregon Health Authority Pubic Option Implementation Report](#) (Manatt Health, January 2022)

## US — Washington (new)

### Status



Effective dates vary

### Development

#### Health

##### Implementation of the state's long-term care program delayed

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee signed legislation (HB 1732) delaying the implementation of the state's long-term care (LTC) program by 18 months and a second bill (HB 1733) adding certain exemptions. The measures:

- Delay premium contribution collection until 1 Jul 2023.
- Require employers to refund to employees — within 120 days — any premiums collected before 1 Jul 2023 but not yet submitted to the Employment Security Department (ESD).
- Allow individuals born before 1 Jan 1968 to qualify for reduced benefits if they have paid the required premiums for at least one year.
- Require ESD to begin accepting premium exemption applications beginning 1 Jan 2023 for the following:
  - Employees whose primary residence is outside Washington
  - US active military spouses and domestic partners
  - Certain disability rated US veterans
  - Temporary worker nonimmigrant visa holders


Employees granted exemptions remain permanently ineligible for state coverage with limited exceptions, such as military discharge, divorce, and change in immigration status or residence.

### Resources

[catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com)

[HB 1732](#); [HB1733](#); [GRIST](#), 3 May 2021

**US — Washington (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Health**  
**Covered lives assessment reduced for 2022**  
The Washington Partnership Access Lines funding program (WAPAL Fund) has announced a reduced assessment rate to \$0.07 per covered life per month for the remainder of state fiscal year 2022. Washington imposes a covered-lives assessment with reporting obligations on health plan payers. Quarterly reports are due within 45 calendar days after the end of each calendar quarter and must contain information on covered individuals who reside in the state. Although reports and assessments are due quarterly, assessments are calculated on a monthly basis. The amended rate takes effect with covered lives payments due on 15 Feb 2022. This rate applies to all ages of covered lives. KidsVax’s assessment system will automatically apply the correct rate for all timely filed payer assessment reports. Any assessed entity that remitted payment for the 15 Feb 2022 due date at the prior \$0.13 rate will receive an automatic refund.

**Resources** [catherine.stamm@mercer.com](mailto:catherine.stamm@mercer.com)  
[Announcement](#) (WAPAL Fund, 25 Jan 2022) and [GRIST](#), 21 Jan 2022

**US — Seattle, Washington (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Health**  
**2022 health expenditure rate for hotel employers posted**  
Seattle has announced 2022 calendar-year health expenditure rates that covered hotel industry employers must make to or on behalf of each covered employee for medical care. The ordinance (Mun. Code Ch. 14.28), applies to most businesses that own, control, or operate a Seattle hotel or motel with 100 or more guest rooms and to “ancillary hotel businesses” with 50 or more employees worldwide. Despite ongoing litigation, covered Seattle businesses must comply.

**Resources** [Improving access to medical care for hotel employees ordinance](#) (Government)

## US (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)

### Development

#### Career

- [Nasdaq board diversity rule approved](#) — Key date: 8 Aug 2022
- [Extensive pay equity law enacted in Rhode Island](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

#### Career — Health

- [Paid sick leave legislation enacted in New Mexico](#) — Key date: 1 Jul 2022
- [2023 EHB benchmark with gender-affirming care approved in Colorado](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023
- [Colorado voters approve paid family and medical leave](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023
- [New Hampshire enacts voluntary paid family leave program](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023
- [Oregon's paid family and medical leave contributions delayed to 2023](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

#### Health

- [1095 health coverage reporting delayed in California](#) — Key date: 31 Mar 2022
- [Employer health plan reporting deadline extended to match federal deadline in Rhode Island](#) — Key date: 31 Mar 2022
- [Employers required to notify employees about electronic monitoring in New York](#) — Key date: 7 May 2022
- [Large group health policies to cover basic healthcare services in California](#) — Key date: 1 Jul 2022
- [Mental health parity law updated in Illinois](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023
- [Consumer privacy law enacted in Virginia](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023



# 4

# Asia Pacific

## Australia

**Status**  Consultation open until 11 Feb 2022

**Development** **Wealth**  
**Consumer remediation guidance proposed**  
The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) issued a second consultation on proposed updates to the Regulatory Guide 256 (RG 256), with input requested through 11 Feb 2022. RG 256 provides guidance on how licensees should act to ensure their remediations are conducted efficiently, honestly and fairly. The latest proposals incorporate input from an earlier consultation, including more clarity about how licensees should conduct remediations to return money owed to consumers.

**Resources** [paul.shallue@mercer.com](mailto:paul.shallue@mercer.com)  
[ASIC consults on consumer remediation draft guidance](#) (ASIC, 17 Nov 2021)


## Australia (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)

**Development** **Career**

- [Revised remuneration standard finalized](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

**Wealth**

- [New mechanism for disclosure of superannuation information in family law proceedings](#) — Key date: 1 Apr 2022
- [Reduced minimum pension payment drawdown extended](#) — Key date: 30 Jun 2022
- [Superannuation insurance standard and guidance issued](#) — Key date: 1 Jul 2022
- [FSC bans occupational exclusions in default insurance in superannuation](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2023

<b>China (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Proposal</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>New workplace gender equality measures proposed</b> Proposed revisions of China’s Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests were recently issued — this would be the first revision of the law since 1992. The measures include boosting women’s participation in enterprises’ workforce representation bodies; prohibition of discrimination in women’s recruitment and career progression, including on grounds of pregnancy and maternity; introduction of certain workplace protections for female employees; improved workplace washroom facilities for women; and the inclusion of gender equality information in corporate annual reports. Employers would have to prevent workplace sexual harassment, and combat domestic violence as much as possible (including disciplining employees who commit domestic violence acts). Fines for employer breaches of certain equality provisions would be between CNY 10,000 and CNY 50,000.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Proposal</a> (Chinese) (Government)

**China/US (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career**

**US bans Chinese products made with forced labor**

The US's Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, signed into law on 23 Dec 2021, bans companies from importing products from the Xinjiang region of China, including products manufactured using raw materials from that region. The US and several other countries (such as Canada and the UK) have alleged that products and raw materials — including cotton, chemicals, polysilicon and coal — are produced using Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Other measures in the act include a rebuttable presumption barring importation of all goods from the Xinjiang region.

US government agencies will publish, in the first half of 2022, information and guidelines to guide companies' due diligence procedures. The US's Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force will develop a government strategy to prevent the importation of products made "wholly or in part with forced labor" in China; draw up lists to help companies ensure that barred entities, facilities and products have not entered their supply chains; and issue guidance to importers on due diligence, supply chain tracing, and supply chain management measures. The Department of State will compile a list of entities in China or affiliates that use or benefit from forced labor in the region, and foreign persons who act as agents for such entities in the importation of goods into the US.

**Resources** [Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act](#) (Legislature)

Hong Kong (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)	
Development	<b>Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Five more statutory holidays to be phased in</a> — Key date: May 2022</li><li>• <a href="#">Gender board diversity, corporate governance required</a> — Key date: 31 Dec 2024</li></ul>
India (new)	
Status	 <b>Proposal</b>
Development	<b>Career</b> <p><b>Remuneration guidelines for CEOs and directors of private insurance companies revised</b></p> <p>The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) of India has issued draft revised Guidelines on Remuneration of Non-Executive Directors and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer/Whole-time Directors of Insurance companies. The goal is to “ensure sound remuneration or compensation practices and avoid situations resulting from excessive risk-taking behavior.” For whole time directors, CEOs and managing directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The remuneration structure should be divided between fixed pay, perquisites and variable pay.</li><li>• Fixed pay should be reasonable.</li><li>• Limits are put on variable pay and, if above INR 15 lakh, a 50% minimum must be deferred on a pro-rata basis over a minimum period of three years.</li><li>• A variable pay formula would be prescribed — with 70% quantitative and 30% qualitative parameters; and the deferred remuneration would be subject to malus/clawback in case of negative performance.</li></ul>
Resources	<a href="#">Guidelines on Remuneration of Non-Executive Directors and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer/Whole-time Directors of Insurance companies</a> (IRDA, 3 Jan 2022)


**India (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)**

<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Career — Health — Wealth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Labor and employment laws reformed</a> — Key date: Effective date unknown</li> </ul> <p><b>Career — Wealth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Top-listed companies face enhanced sustainability reporting</a> — Key date: April 2022</li> </ul> <p><b>Wealth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Guidance addresses taxation of certain employee provident fund contributions</a> — Key date: April 2022</li> </ul>
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**Japan (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)**

<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Career — Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Childcare leave entitlement expanded</a> — Key date: Beginning in April 2022</li> </ul> <p><b>Wealth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Defined contribution reforms enacted</a> — Key date: 1 Dec 2024</li> </ul>
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**Philippines (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Proposal</b>
<b>Development</b>	<p><b>Career</b></p> <p><b>Protections for workers’ rest hours proposed</b></p> <p>A bill to protect workers’ rest hours recently was presented to parliament, and if passed, employers could not require workers to perform any work outside of the normal eight-hour working day unless overtime is allowed by labor laws or workers give written consent. The bill would apply to “all establishments and undertakings whether for profit or not,” but would not apply to field personnel, domestic helpers, output-based workers, and those in the personal service of another. Employers would face sanctions of up to PHP 1,000 per hour of work performed during a worker’s rest hours, and criminal and financial penalties for discriminating against workers who enforce their rights under the law.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p><a href="mailto:pauline.cardenas@mercer.com">pauline.cardenas@mercer.com</a></p> <p><a href="#">S 2475</a> (Government)</p>

## South Korea (new)

### Status



Currently effective

### Development

#### Career — Health

##### **Paid parental leave enhanced**


South Korea has made changes to enhance paid parental leave. The parental leave pay rate increased to 100% — up from 80% — for the first three months of leave. Both parents can take the leave until their child is one year old. Parents of children born in 2021 are eligible for this so-called “3+3 parental leave policy” — the parent who did not take parental leave in 2021 will be eligible for parental leave in 2022, even if the other parent took leave in 2021. The previous “paternity leave bonus policy” will be merged with the “3+3 parental leave policy” during 2022. In addition, to boost the use of parental leave, the payment amount increased to 80% (up from 50% of ordinary wages), from the fourth to the twelfth month, capped at KRW 1,500,000. For single-parent workers, the payment amount for the seventh to twelfth month of leave increased to 80% (up from 50% of ordinary wages), capped at KRW 1,500,000. Finally, a new parental leave subsidy has been introduced to reduce the burden on employers, and to boost parental leave provision for children younger than one year. The government will pay a subsidy of KRW 300,000 per month, per employee, to employers of preferentially supported companies who allow employees to take parental leave, and will pay KRW 2,000,000 per month to employers for the first three months of parental leave schemes exceeding three months that are open to children younger than one year. The previous subsidy policies for large companies and the replacement of workers on parental leave ended in 2021.

### Resources

[sungjae.you@mercer.com](mailto:sungjae.you@mercer.com)

[Press release](#) (Korean) (Ministry of Employment and Labor, 30 Sep 2021)

**South Korea (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career**  
**Private-sector employers now entitled to more holidays**  
Private-sector employers with five or more employees must give their employees the same paid national holidays that apply to the public sector. However, Sunday does not count as a paid national holiday because private-sector employers must already provide a paid day off every week under the Labor Standards Act 55.1. In addition, employers can substitute another working day for a national holiday, based on the operational needs of the business, and subject to prior written agreement with employee representatives. Employers must pay a 50% holiday premium to employees who were not allowed to take a national holiday, or a designated substitute holiday, and who worked for fewer than eight hours. The premium increases to 100% for employees who worked for more than eight hours.

**Resources** [sungjae.you@mercer.com](mailto:sungjae.you@mercer.com)  
[Government Release](#) (Korean) (Ministry of Employment and Labor, 3 Jan. 2022)


**South Korea (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Wealth**  
**More employees able to participate in workplace-based National Pension Scheme**  
Beginning 1 Jan 2022, part-time employees or employees who have less than a one month labor contract period that are paid more than KRW 2,200,000 per month are eligible to register for the workplace National Pension Scheme, and to contribute 4.5% of monthly wages to the fund. Employers will also contribute another 4.5% of employees' monthly wages to the funds.

**Resources** [sungjae.you@mercer.com](mailto:sungjae.you@mercer.com)  
[National Pension Scheme Release](#) (Korean) (National Pension Scheme, 30 Dec 2021)

**South Korea (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health</b> <b>Expansion of reduced working hours scheme for family care</b> Employees in companies with fewer than 30 employees (but more than one) are now eligible for reduced working hours on grounds of a family member's sickness, accident, old age, preparation for retirement if 55 years or more, or to pursue studies. Introduced under 2019 changes to the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work Family Balance Assistance Act, the reduced working hours scheme allows employees to reduce their working hours by a minimum of 15 hours to a maximum of 30 hours per week for family care purposes.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="mailto:sungjae.you@mercer.com">sungjae.you@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">Government release</a> (Korean) (Ministry of Employment and Labor, 27 Dec 2021)

**South Korea (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)**

<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Protections against gender discrimination and sexual harassment to expand</a> — Key date: 19 May 2022</li></ul>
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## 5

# Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA)

### EU (previously covered with upcoming effective dates)

#### Development

#### Career

- [Law strengthens rights of 'nonstandard workers'](#) — Key date: Summer 2022

#### Career — Health

- [Measures on work-life balance, including leave, finalized](#) — Key date: Summer 2022

#### Wealth

- [ESG agenda, capital markets union progress](#) — Key date: 10 Mar 2022

### Belgium (new)

#### Status



Currently effective

#### Development

#### Career

#### Expatriate taxation scheme revised

Changes to the expatriate taxation regime took effect on 1 Jan 2022. The scheme is open to eligible employees and key persons directly recruited by a Belgian company from abroad, or temporarily assigned to a Belgian entity that is part of a multinational group, or to researchers, for a maximum period of five years (this can be extended by up to three years). The scheme allows up to 30% of the employee's gross annual income to be paid as a tax-free expense reimbursement (capped at €90,000 per year) — employers can increase the reimbursement amount for certain expenses. Expatriate employees already employed under the old expatriate scheme for fewer than five years can opt-in to the new regime by 31 Jul 2022, or remain in the old scheme under transitional rules that will expire on 31 Dec 2023. Practical issues for the new regime have to be clarified, and publication of guidance is expected.

#### Resources

[Law](#) (French) (Government)

## Belgium (upcoming effective date)

### Development

#### Wealth

- [Blue- and white-collar pension harmonization approaches](#) — Key date: 1 Jan 2025

## France (new)

### Status



Effective dates vary

### Development

#### Career


#### **New gender quotas for senior execs, management teams imposed**


A law to accelerate economic and professional equality recently passed parliament. Highlights include:

- Companies with more than 1,000 employees will have to meet 30% and then 40% quotas for more equal gender representation among senior executives and management committee members. From 1 Mar 2026, companies will have two years to ensure that women hold 30% or more of senior executive roles and management committee seats and to negotiate corrective measures, or implement measures in the absence of an agreement. From 1 Mar 2029, companies will have two years to comply with the 40% quota, and sanctions for noncompliance (up to 1% of the company's payroll) will take effect from 1 Mar 2031.
- From March 2022, companies must publish annually on their websites, an analysis of gender representation for their senior executive roles and management committee membership.
- Companies with 50 or more employees that must publish an annual gender equality index under a 2018 law will have to disclose the indicators used to determine their final index score.
- To improve female entrepreneurs' access to finance, the project selection committee of the public bank — Bpifrance — must comprise 30% or more female representation, increasing to 40% from 2027. From 1 May 2023, the bank will be allowed to grant loans or equity financing only to companies that have published a gender equality index.
- Other measures to help women include requiring company collective agreements on teleworking to specify conditions to allow pregnant employees to telework, and for employers to pay wages into bank accounts in the employee's name, or that are jointly held by the employee.

### Resources

[ayce.nisancioglu@mercer.com](mailto:ayce.nisancioglu@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 21 Jan 2022

<b>Germany (upcoming effective date)</b>	
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <a href="#">Larger companies face human rights mandates</a> — Key date: 1 Jan 2023
<b>Ireland (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Proposal</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health</b> <b>Legal framework to request remote working proposed</b> Proposed measures that would give employees in Ireland a legal framework to request remote work feature in the Right to Request Remote Working Bill 2022, published by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on 25 Jan 2022. Currently, employees can request to work remotely, but there is no legal framework for how to make and handle requests. The bill would require employers to publish a remote working policy outlining procedures for handling remote working requests, and to bring their policy to employees’ attention “at least annually,” and to all new hires. Employers without a remote working policy would face fines of up to €2,500. Employers would have to respond to employees’ remote working requests within 12 weeks. Requests could be refused on certain “business grounds” (such as internet connectivity, distance from the employer’s onsite location, concerns about data protection, planned structural changes to the business, and disciplinary procedures concerning the employee), but employers must provide employees with an explanation. Employees could appeal a refusal but if it fails, they could not submit another remote working request for 12 months — this does not apply if the employee changes their role. A code of practice would provide guidance to employers, employees and unions. More details on the proposed bill are expected, and the proposal follows the government’s remote-work strategy published in January 2021 and a consultation that ended in May 2021.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Right To Request Remote Work Bill 2022</a> (Government) and <a href="#">GRIST</a> , 3 Feb 2021
<b>Ireland (upcoming effective date)</b>	
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Employers face annual reporting mandate on gender pay gap</a> — Key date: Effective date unknown</li></ul>

<b>Israel (upcoming effective date)</b>	
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Gender pay gap reporting expanded</a> — Key date: 1 Jun 2022</li></ul>
<b>Italy (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <p><b>Budget includes measures to boost jobs</b></p> <p>Expanded furlough schemes and social security contribution exemptions are among the employment measures included in Italy’s Budget Law for 2022. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employer and employee exemptions from social security contributions are capped at €6,000 per year for employees hired on permanent contracts from companies in crisis.</li><li>• Employers that hire apprentices can get tax relief in 2022 equivalent to 100% of the contributions paid.</li><li>• Employers can receive a 50% tax exemption from social security contributions for up to one year for mothers who return to work in 2022 after maternity leave.</li><li>• Furlough schemes have expanded to include employers with fewer than 15 employees and generally cover all employees, except executives.</li><li>• The minimum employment service for salary support eligibility is reduced to 30 days from 90.</li><li>• Employers could benefit from additional payments under the extraordinary furlough scheme (“CIGS”).</li><li>• Employer and trade unions can now agree to “solidarity contracts” to reduce working hours up to 80% (an increase from 60%).</li><li>• Certain employers with more than 250 employees that are considering terminating 50 or more employees must now conduct a special information and consultation procedure to reach an agreement with applicable trade unions, in addition to following normal layoff rules.</li></ul> <p>Additionally, the government is expected to issue guidelines to address the misuse of internships, which will address the payment and subsequent hiring of interns.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">GRIST</a> , 24 Jan 2022

**Kuwait (upcoming effective date)**

**Development**      **Health**

- [Insurance companies, brokers required to register](#) — Key date: 11 Mar 2022

**Luxembourg (new)**

**Status**       **Currently effective**

**Development**      **Career — Health — Wealth**

**Social security salary amounts revised**

The minimum and maximum monthly salary amounts for calculating social security contribution rates are EUR 2,256.95 and EUR 11,284.77 respectively (or EUR 27,083 and EUR 135,417.24 per year). The rate range for mutual healthcare insurance increased (0.60% to 2.98%, up from 0.53% to 2.88%) — the applicable rate is linked to the employees' absentee rate.

**Resources**      [Information on rates](#) (French) (Government)

**Netherlands (upcoming effective date)**


**Development**      **Career — Health**

- [Paid parental leave enacted](#) — Key date: August 2022

**Wealth**

- [Pension plan reforms delayed](#) — Key date: Expected to be enacted in 2023

**Norway (new)**

**Status**  **2 Jul 2022**

**Development** **Career — Health**

**Companies face new human rights due diligence, reporting**

Approximately 8,000 companies in Norway face new human rights due diligence obligations under measures featured in the Transparency Act, (the Act) effective 2 Jul 2022. Highlights include:

- Companies will be subject to the Act if they meet two or more criteria — they must have 50 or more full-time employees averaged over the fiscal year, a balance sheet of NOK 35 million or more, or sales revenue of NOK 70 million or more.
- Human rights include internationally recognized human rights and decent working conditions (such as fundamental human rights, workplace health, safety, environmental issues and living wages).
- Companies must conduct due diligence proportionate to the size and nature of their enterprise, and the context of their operations.
- Companies' annual statements must include specified information in the Act and must be signed by all board members of the company's executive board — or the general manager if there is no board.
- Companies must respond in reasonable time to third-party requests for information about how the company is addressing actual or potential adverse impacts identified in its due diligence assessment. In certain circumstances, companies can refuse to provide information.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs can issue regulations regarding due diligence, reporting and third-party information rights, and clarification about the issues. The Norwegian Consumer Authority will enforce the Act, and could impose fines for noncompliance, and issue compliance orders.

**Resources** [GRIST](#), 19 Jan 2022

**Oman (upcoming effective date)**

**Development** **Health**

- [Oman issues implementation rules for new health insurance scheme](#) — Key date: Effective date unknown

Portugal (new)	
Status	 <b>Currently effective</b>
Development	<b>Career — Health</b> <b>Bereavement law expanded</b> Portugal has expanded the amount of bereavement leave that employees can take to 20 consecutive days, up from five, following the death of a child, and now offers psychological support in some circumstances. Child includes stepchild, a child for whom the employee has civil custody, or son/daughter-in law. Employees are entitled to five days for the death a spouse, an unmarried or household partner, parents, parents in law or step-parent; and two days for grandparents or great grandparents, grandchildren or great grandchildren, siblings, and siblings-in-law. Employees suffering a bereavement can request psychological support from the national health system — the request must be made within five days of the bereavement. The measures are included in Law No. 1/2022.
Resources	<a href="#">Law No. 1/2022 of 3 Jan 2022 (Portuguese) (Government)</a>
Qatar (upcoming effective date)	
Development	<b>Career — Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">Employers must provide healthcare coverage to expatriate employees</a> — Key date: April 2022</li></ul>
Romania (new)	
Status	 <b>Currently effective</b>
Development	<b>Career</b> <b>Minimum wage rate increased</b> From 1 Jan 2022, the gross minimum monthly basic wage in Romania increased to RON 2,550, up from RON 2,300. The different salary amounts payable to employees with higher education qualifications were removed. Employees can only be paid the minimum gross base salary for a maximum of 24 months, after which time they must be paid a higher salary. The 24-month period started on 1 Jan 2022, regardless of when the employee’s minimum wage payment commenced.
Resources	<a href="#">No. 1071/2021 (Romanian) (Government, 4 Oct 2021)</a>


## Saudi Arabia (upcoming effective date)

### Development


### Career

- Contracting with companies with regional headquarters outside of the kingdom to cease — Key date: 1 Jan 2024



<b>Spain (new)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <b>Labor reforms enacted</b> Labor reforms have been enacted measures in Royal Decree Law 32/2021. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The most commonly used temporary contract (for a specific job or service) was eliminated.</li><li>• Temporary contracts for the fulfillment of production requirements will be limited to six months, extendable for up to 12 months depending on the applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA).</li><li>• Additional employer social security contributions are payable for all temporary contracts with a duration of fewer than 30 days, and social security contribution rules will be introduced for reduced working hours or suspended employment contracts.</li><li>• The use of fixed-term contracts (of indefinite duration but limited to specific periods of activity during the year) is allowed to take on tasks arising from subcontracting.</li><li>• One type of training contract will allow individuals to combine paid employment with study for up to two years, or obtain work experience commensurate with their education attainment for up to three years.</li><li>• Temporary layoffs for economic, technical, organizational or production reasons or for force majeure reasons (“ERTE”) now explicitly include public health reasons in companies with fewer than 50 employees, and the ERTE model has been adjusted to include elements permitted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council of Ministers can activate the “RED” Mechanism for Employment Flexibility and Stabilization to allow companies to request approval for temporary reductions in working hours, and to suspend employment contracts in certain circumstances. A new benefit will be paid to employees impacted by the RED mechanism. Companies are exempt from certain contributions if they meet the eligibility criteria.</li><li>• The different categories of infringements are revised, and increased penalties will apply to serious breaches.</li><li>• The one-year limit on the validity (ultra-activity) of CBAs is eliminated.</li></ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="mailto:gloria.villar@mercer.com">gloria.villar@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">GRIST</a> , 24 Jan 2022


**Turkey (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Career**  
**Monthly minimum wage increased**  
Turkey’s monthly minimum wage increased on 1 Jan 2022 to TRY 4,250, with increased payments for employees depending on their marital status and number of children. The 2022 rate is 50% higher than the 2021 rate, and the largest for 50 years, the government announced.

**Resources** [Announcement](#) (Government, 16 Dec 2022)


**Turkey (new)**

**Status**  **Currently effective**

**Development** **Wealth**  
**Pension changes enacted**  
On 22 Jan 2022, Turkey’s state contribution to pension contracts increased to 30%, up from 25%. The new maximum state contribution amount for 2022 is TRY 18,014.40 and will be paid on pension contributions up to TRY 60,048. Individuals whose pension contributions in 2022 exceed TRY 60,048 will not be paid the additional state contribution, but the amount will be recalculated and carried forward to 2023. Other pension changes include allowing individuals to withdraw up to 50% of their pension funds (excluding the state contribution account), subject to meeting eligibility criteria that will be published soon. Employees older than 45 are now allowed to participate voluntarily in the auto-enrollment plan, subject to notifying their employer.

**Resources** [evsen.olmez@mercer.com](mailto:evsen.olmez@mercer.com)  
[Law](#) (Turkish) (Government)

## UAE (previously covered, now effective )

Status  2 Feb 2022

### Development

#### Career — Health

##### Extensive private-sector labor reforms enacted


Private-sector labor reforms have been enacted, and implementation rules are expected. Highlights include:

- Employers may not force employees to work for them or provide a service against their will.
- Sexual harassment, bullying or any verbal, physical or psychological violence against employees is prohibited.
- Prohibitions against discrimination that would reduce equal opportunity possibilities were expanded.
- New types of work, such as part-time, temporary and flexible work were introduced.
- Wages can now be paid in Emirati Dirhams or any other currency.
- Noncompete restrictions may be imposed on employees under certain circumstances.
- Employment contracts of indefinite durations are subject to the decree-law.
- Unlimited employment contracts must be converted to fixed-term employment contracts within one year of the effective date of the existing contract and may be extended by the Cabinet for further periods.
- Private-sector employees are entitled to a paid, weekly rest day. Employees are also entitled to compassionate leave ranging from three to five days. In addition, paternity leave of five days will be granted.
- Employees cannot work more than five consecutive hours without at least one-hour break, and no more than two hours of overtime is allowed in one day.
- Employers must pay recruitment costs and cannot charge recruitment fees.
- Employers are prohibited from withholding official documents.
- Probationary periods cannot exceed six months.
- Employees are entitled to an end-of-service gratuity.
- A foreign full-time employee who has completed at least one year of service will receive end-of-service benefits.
- Judicial fees up to AED 100,000 are waived in all stages of litigation.


### Resources

[sebastian.fuchs@mercer.com](mailto:sebastian.fuchs@mercer.com) and [ted.raffoul@mercer.com](mailto:ted.raffoul@mercer.com)  
[GRIST](#), 18 Nov 2021


**UK (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health — Wealth</b> <b>Employers to notify employees about national insurance increase, health/social care levy</b> The UK's tax authority, HMRC, has asked employers to notify employees via their payslips about the increased National Insurance (NI) contributions that will be levied from 6 Apr 2022 until 5 Apr 2023. The 1.25% NI increase will be used to help fund the National Health Service, health and social care. From April 2023, NI contribution rates will revert to 2021 to 2022 levels, and the health and social care levy will become a separate new tax of 1.25%. Employers will have to report the levy as a new item through Real Time Information, and payslips will need to show it as a separate levy for employees eligible to pay it.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Prepare for the health and social care levy</a> (Government, 31 Jan 2022)


**UK (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>6 Apr 2022</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career</b> <b>Certain 'right to work' checks to be verified online</b> From 6 Apr 2022, UK employers will no longer be able to check physical documents, but instead must use a new online verification process for checking the right to work for individuals with a Visa who hold a biometric residence card (BRC), biometric residence permit (BRP), or frontier worker permit (FWP). Employees for whom manual checks were completed on or before 5 Apr 2022 do not need to be checked until their biometric card expires. On 17 Jan 2022, the Home Office published an update to the "Employer right to work checks supporting guidance."
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Employer right to work checks supporting guidance</a> (Government, 17 Jan 2022)

**UK (new)**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Currently effective</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Wealth</b> <b>Regulations on 'stronger nudge' to Pensions Wise guidance announced</b> The UK government announced that pension scheme trustees and administrators must offer to book an optional Pension Wise appointment for members choosing to access their defined contribution (DC) benefit, or if a member older than 50 opts to transfer their DC benefit to another arrangement (unless the transfer purpose is to consolidate benefits). Pension Wise is a government-run service offering free guidance on DC pensions. The government's announcement follows an earlier consultation on proposed regulations that closed in September 2021.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="mailto:anne.bennett@mercer.com">anne.bennett@mercer.com</a> <a href="#">Stronger nudge to pensions guidance</a> (Government, 17 Jan 2022)

**UK**

<b>Status</b>	 <b>Consultation open until 25 Mar 2022</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Career — Health</b> <b>Consultation on large employers' disability reporting invites input</b> A government consultation invites input on the benefits and barriers of mandatory or voluntary disability reporting by employers with 250 or more employees. Comments can be submitted through 25 Mar 2022, and the government's response will be published by 17 Jun 2022. Employers that already collect data on employees with disabilities are asked to provide information about the data type, method and cost, and if collection has resulted in more inclusive employment practices. The consultation also invites views on the value of introducing a standardized disability reporting framework, the types of information that should be collected, and the publication and/or reporting of workforce data to the government or regulatory body.
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="#">Consultation on disability workforce reporting</a> (Government, 16 Dec 2021)

## UK (previously covered with upcoming effective date)

### Development

#### Career

- [Revised living and minimum wage rates announced](#) — Key date: 1 Apr 2022

**Mercer (US) Inc.**  
Washington Square  
1050 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.mercer.com](http://www.mercer.com)

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