# California's new laws for 2025 bring significant changes across various sectors



California has ushered in a new year by enacting a plethora of new laws, following the passage of nearly 1,200 bills last year by state lawmakers. Governor Gavin Newsom signed approximately 84% of the legislation, many of which officially take effect from January 1, 2025. This comprehensive overview highlights significant changes across multiple sectors including cannabis, artificial intelligence, wages, housing, healthcare, education, and safety.

A notable change in cannabis legislation is the legalisation of cannabis cafes under Assembly Bill 1775. This new law allows cannabis retailers to operate as cafes or lounges, enabling them to serve food and non-alcoholic beverages alongside cannabis products. Previously restricted to selling only pre-packaged snacks and drinks, this change is anticipated to enhance the social experience of cannabis consumption. However, some health advocates have raised concerns about the potential risks associated with secondhand smoke in these settings.

In the realm of artificial intelligence, significant protections have been introduced for actors. Assembly Bill 2602 mandates that contracts be created to regulate the use of AI in replicating an actor's voice or likeness. This legislation follows a notable strike in Hollywood where actors and writers negotiated terms surrounding AI use. Additionally, under Assembly Bill 1836, individuals can incur a fine of up to $10,000 for using the voice of a deceased actor without explicit consent from their estate. This law aims to prevent the exploitation of the voices of deceased performers in an era where technology allows for easy cloning of voices.

Further restrictions on the use of AI include Senate Bill 926, which expands existing laws on revenge porn to now encompass deepfakes involving sexually explicit content. This law specifically targets the distribution of such content that is created with the intention of causing emotional distress. In tandem, Senate Bill 981 requires social media platforms to implement reporting mechanisms for users depicted in non-consensual sexually explicit deepfakes, tackling what authorities describe as a growing threat online.

In terms of labour and personal finance, there are new measures to provide financial relief to California workers. Assembly Bill 2017 prohibits overdraft fees from being charged by state-chartered banks and credit unions, aligning this provision with federal proposals made earlier in the year. Concurrently, the statewide minimum wage will increase from $16 to $16.50 per hour, while fast-food workers will see their minimum pay raised to $20 per hour.

There are also advancements in family leave compensation. Under Senate Bill 951, workers earning less than $63,000 annually will now receive 90% of their pay during family leave, a substantial increase from previous provisions that offered lower-paid workers only 70%. The funding for this enhanced benefit comes from a slight increase in the payroll deduction rate for all workers contributing to California's disability income programme.

In the housing sector, Assembly Bill 2347 doubles the time tenants have to respond to eviction notices from five to ten business days. The bill's author argues that the previous timeframe was unreasonably short, often disadvantaging tenants in eviction cases. Moreover, in healthcare, legislation under Senate Bill 1061 stipulates that medical debt will no longer be reported to credit agencies, alleviating the burden on many Californians who are grappling with unpaid medical bills.

Educational laws have also seen significant reform. Assembly Bill 1805 mandates that California public schools teach about the landmark Mendez vs. Westminster case, a pivotal moment in the fight against segregation affecting Mexican Americans. In addition, Assembly Bill 1955 protects students' rights regarding gender identity by preventing school districts from compelling staff to inform parents of students’ name or pronoun changes, a response to rising tensions between various community perspectives on parental notification.

On the safety front, stricter parking regulations have been put in place under Assembly Bill 413, imposing penalties for parking too close to crosswalks to enhance pedestrian visibility. The state has also introduced a series of new laws targeting retail theft. These measures allow for retailers to obtain restraining orders against repeat offenders, facilitates cross-county prosecutions for theft-related crimes, and imposes harsher penalties for those who commit arson while stealing.

This comprehensive set of new laws sets a legislative tone for California as it steps into a new year, influencing various components of everyday life for its residents.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Corroborates the new laws in California, including the extension of time for tenants to respond to eviction notices and changes in retail theft laws.
* <https://www.independent.com/2024/12/30/california-new-laws-for-2025-cannabis-cafes-and-entertainment-zones/> - Supports the legalization of cannabis cafes under Assembly Bill 1775 and the designation of entertainment zones.
* <https://www.independent.com/2024/12/30/california-new-laws-for-2025-cannabis-cafes-and-entertainment-zones/> - Provides details on the opposition and additional protections included in the cannabis cafe legislation.
* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Details the changes in family leave compensation under Senate Bill 951 and the increase in minimum wage.
* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Explains the new laws related to medical debt reporting and the protection of students' rights regarding gender identity.
* <https://www.independent.com/2024/12/30/california-new-laws-for-2025-cannabis-cafes-and-entertainment-zones/> - Mentions the economic and social impacts of the new entertainment zones and cannabis cafes.
* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Discusses the implementation of the CA Transparency Act related to AI-generated content, although it takes effect in 2026.
* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Details the changes in collaborative justice courts and the extension of remote proceedings in juvenile and civil cases.
* <https://www.independent.com/2024/12/30/california-new-laws-for-2025-cannabis-cafes-and-entertainment-zones/> - Provides context on the legislative efforts to boost downtown economies through new laws on alcohol and cannabis sales.
* <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/new-california-laws-going-effect-2025> - Corroborates the new laws targeting retail theft, including the imposition of harsher penalties and the ability to obtain restraining orders against repeat offenders.