

## UPDATE FROM OUR LOBBYIST: END OF LEGISLATIVE YEAR



On September 13th the California State Legislature concluded its work. Bills that were passed were sent to Governor Newsom, who has 30 days to sign or veto each one. For employers, the results of the 2025 legislative year were a mixed bag. While there will be new laws that you will have to comply with in 2026, there were other proposed laws that failed, thereby averting additional compliance burdens for you.

### The good news

AB 1331, a bill which would have prevented employers from establishing surveillance means to protect their businesses, failed. Had this bill passed, common tools used to protect your business and ensure employee safety, such as cameras or other tracking technologies, would have been outlawed.

SB 295, a bill which would have outlawed the use of technologies (including artificial intelligence)

that help businesses set pricing on goods and services, failed. In addition to SB 295, a number of other artificial intelligence-related bills impacting employers also failed.

### The bad news

SB 7 – a bill which we were lobbying heavily against – passed and now awaits the governor’s signature. If signed, SB 7 will limit the ability of employers to use automated decision systems to help make human resources decisions, including hiring, firing, compensation, disciplinary actions and more.

A noteworthy aspect of SB 7 is that it requires employers to notify all employees whether or not automated decision systems, as defined in the bill, are being deployed in their workplace. This is significant because SB 7 has a very broad definition of what counts as an “automated decision system.” For example, if you post job openings to job websites that use your pre-set parameters to screen

applicants, this could trigger SB 7 compliance. On a side note, this is another reason to take advantage of PIA’s free-for-members Employment Services, and simply let PIA’s experienced recruiters find the employees you need!

### Conclusion

All in all, 2025 was a lighter year on threats from labor-sponsored legislation in the human resources arena than past years. However, a large battle over the development of anti-trust statutes looms for 2026. The California Law Review Commission will soon release its bill package of new anti-trust laws that will impact every employer in the state. We will update you on these developments soon.

*Source: RJ Cervantes, Resilient Advocacy, Inc., PIA’s lobbyist in Sacramento*

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### WHAT HAPPENS TO FINAL WAGES WHEN AN EMPLOYEE PASSES AWAY?



The loss of an employee is a difficult moment for any workplace, and it often leaves employers with questions about how to properly handle final wages. Each state follows its own requirements, so it’s important that employers understand their local laws.

#### What to do in California

In California, the process is shaped by state probate law and requires a careful but straightforward approach...

- **When there is a surviving spouse or registered domestic partner** – Under California Probate Code, wages owed to a deceased employee, including salary, overtime and accrued vacation or PTO, may be paid directly to the surviving spouse or registered domestic partner. To claim these wages, the individual must complete a sworn affidavit confirming their relationship to the employee, that no probate proceeding is underway and that no one else has a superior claim. Employers should request proof of identity with the affidavit before releasing payment.
- **When there is no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner** – If the deceased employee was not married and had no registered domestic partner, employers cannot disburse final wages until contacted by either the executor of the employee’s estate or the beneficiaries of the estate.

If the employee had a will or trust, the executor will direct payment of wages, and employers may lawfully follow those instructions.

If the employee died without a will or trust, wages may only be released if the employer receives an affidavit signed by all potential beneficiaries no sooner than 40 days after the date of death. This affidavit confirms that the signers are the only rightful beneficiaries and directs how the wages should be distributed. Once received, this affidavit protects the employer from later claims by other individuals. Such payment is made via 1099-MISC to the beneficiaries, not via W-2 to the employee, as the income is given directly to the beneficiaries.

- **Circumstances under which probate is not needed** – California law allows up to \$18,450 net to be paid without going through probate court. This streamlined process ensures families can access wages more quickly at a time when financial stability is often needed most. If the wages exceed the statutory limit or if there are competing claims, employers should seek legal advice before moving forward. If you are not contacted as described above, send outstanding wages to the Office of the Labor Commissioner of the State of California, who will oversee future disbursement should a lawful heir make a claim at a later point.

#### What to do in other states

Employers with operations outside of California should know that many states follow a similar structure, but the details vary:

- **Alaska, Arizona, Colorado and Hawaii** – Final wages can typically be released to a surviving spouse (or in some cases children), based on an affidavit.
- **Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming** – Each of these states has “small estate” or affidavit processes that allow final wages to be collected by heirs without probate, often subject to a dollar limit.
- **Waiting periods** – Be aware that many states also require a waiting period before these affidavits can be used. This is often between 30 and 45 days after death, and in some states as long as 90 days. To avoid missteps, employers should confirm the local timeline before releasing funds. In all states, employers should confirm local thresholds and affidavit requirements before issuing payment.

#### Be prepared

The best practice across jurisdictions is to keep a ready-to-use affidavit form on file. In California, this is the Deceased Employee Compensation Collection Form. In other states, employers should be prepared to accept a state-specific affidavit form or a small estate affidavit permitted under local probate law. Always request proof of identity before releasing payment, and consult counsel if the amount owed exceeds the state’s threshold or if multiple claims arise.

By having the right forms and procedures in place, employers can provide needed financial support to families, remain legally compliant and navigate this sensitive situation with care.

Reach out to PIA’s HR support at [piasc@jinjhr.com](mailto:piasc@jinjhr.com) with additional questions, to obtain a copy of an appropriate affidavit form, or if you need support in this process.

*Source: JinjiHR, [www.jinjhr.com](http://www.jinjhr.com)*

## MEMBER BENEFITS

### OPEN ENROLLMENT IS UNDERWAY!

If your company offers benefits through the Printing Industries Benefit Trust (PIBT), open enrollment is now underway—and your “Yearbook” should have arrived.

#### Key deadlines:

- **November 21 for coverage starting December 1, 2025**
- **December 22 for coverage starting January 1, 2026**

If you have not yet received your Yearbook, please reach out to your assigned Health Advocate and request a copy via email, or download a digital copy from the PIBT portal.

- **Companies beginning with letters A – I:** Contact Sandra Bonilla, [sandra@pibt.org](mailto:sandra@pibt.org), 323-728-9500 ext. 258
- **Companies beginning with letters J – Z:** Contact Tina Morales, [tina@pibt.org](mailto:tina@pibt.org), 323-728-9500 ext. 226



MEMBER BENEFITS

KEEP UP WITH THE WAGE & BENEFITS SURVEY – GET LIVE UPDATED INFORMATION!

The PIA-members-only Wage & Benefits Survey is still open and live for results. While the data collected by this regional survey is similar to what was collected in the national survey that PIA previously participated in, there are some significant improvements.

Here’s what you need to know...



Why should we participate?

Participating in the Wage & Benefits Survey is the only way to gain access to the survey data, an invaluable source of intelligence and insight that can help you ensure your business is competitive in your marketplace. This is Graphic Communications industry-specific data that is:

- **Continuously updated**, with real-time reporting
- **Downloadable in Excel or csv format**, so that you can manipulate the data to suit your company’s specific information needs (a HUGE improvement over a static PDF!)
- **Available by region** (California, Northwest states, Southwest states) as well as for the Association as a whole

In many ways, the Wage & Benefits Survey data can be your “secret weapon” in hiring and retaining the workforce you need. Access to this data is an important benefit of your PIA membership.

What type of data does the survey cover?

- Wages by job title
- Shift differentials

- Overtime policies
- Incentives based on productivity, sales or other metrics
- Holiday, PTO and bereavement pay policies
- Medical insurance details, including plans, deductibles and cost sharing
- Retirement or profit sharing plans
- Absence data
- Employee turnover data

Who can participate?

The survey is open to all PIA members in good standing that are not suppliers or vendors (i.e., all PIA member types other than Associate). There is no charge to participate in the survey and receive the data, which is not available for purchase by non-participants.

How do we participate?

Simply create an account at **www.wbsurvey.org** and then fill out the survey, entering data based on your company’s wages and policies as of your data entry date.

MEMBER NEWS

PLEASE FILL OUT THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

By now PIA’s Annual Membership Survey has arrived in your mail and email. Please be sure to take a few minutes to fill out the Survey and return it to us by November 17, 2025.

Each year your answers help ensure that:

1. **Your company’s information in our Membership Directory is correct.** This includes both the continuously-updated online Directory and the printed version that is produced every other year.
2. **Your PIA dues are accurate.** Membership dues are based on your previous year’s employee count and sales volume, and can therefore be increased or decreased to reflect your company’s situation. If you do not keep us informed, our assumption that your business is growing and thriving can result in automatic annual dues increases.



MEMBER NEWS

MGX’S PRESSURE SENSITIVE ADHESIVE FILMS

MGX, a leading innovator in specialty substrates and coating technologies, has announced an updated offering of pressure sensitive adhesive films designed to meet the unique needs of the digital printing industry. Engineered to meet a wide range of application demands, the product line includes a range of adhesive and liner options. For more information, see <https://mgxdigital.com/pressure-sensitive/>.



CONTACT US

ADDRESS

5800 S. Eastern Avenue,  
Suite 400  
Los Angeles, CA 90040  
  
P.O. Box 910936  
Los Angeles, CA 90091  
Phone: 323.728.9500  
  
[www.piasc.org](http://www.piasc.org)

KEY CONTACTS

**LOU CARON**  
*President/CEO*  
Ext. 274  
[lou@piasc.org](mailto:lou@piasc.org)

**KATHY SCHMIDT**  
*Director, Insurance Services*  
Ext. 223  
[kathy.schmidt@piascins.com](mailto:kathy.schmidt@piascins.com)

**EVIE BAÑAGA**  
*Employee Benefits*  
Ext. 224  
[evie@pibt.org](mailto:evie@pibt.org)

**KRISTY VILLANUEVA**  
*Member Services*  
Ext. 215  
[kristy@piasc.org](mailto:kristy@piasc.org)

**SUSAN LEVI**  
*Human Resources*  
[piasc@jinjhr.com](mailto:piasc@jinjhr.com)

EVENTS CALENDAR

For full list of events, please visit [www.piasc.org/events](http://www.piasc.org/events)

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY WEBINAR

Wednesday, October 22, 2025  
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM PT  
[bit.ly/WEBSITE-ACCESSIBILITY](http://bit.ly/WEBSITE-ACCESSIBILITY)

PRINTING UNITED EXPO

October 22 – 24, 2025  
Orlando, FL  
[www.PrintingUnited.com](http://www.PrintingUnited.com)

R.A.I.S.E. ANNUAL SURPLUS DRIVE

October 30 – 31, 2025  
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM PT  
Anaheim, CA  
For more information contact Kristy Villanueva at [kristy@piasc.org](mailto:kristy@piasc.org)

MANAGEMENT SKILLS – FROM RECOGNITION TO RESOLUTION WEBINAR

Wednesday, November 5, 2025  
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM PT  
[bit.ly/MANAGEMENT-SKILLS](http://bit.ly/MANAGEMENT-SKILLS)

SPOTLIGHT EVENT

CONNECTUP NETWORKING EVENT

Wednesday, November 5, 2025  
4:00 PM – 7:00 PM PT  
Inland Group  
Anaheim, CA

Don’t miss this opportunity to do some networking, take a plant tour to check out some of HP’s latest equipment and enjoy delicious appetizers and drinks. For more information or to RSVP contact Kristy Villanueva at [kristy@piasc.org](mailto:kristy@piasc.org) or Karissa Melara at [karissa@piasc.org](mailto:karissa@piasc.org).

IN THIS ISSUE:

FEATURE: UPDATE FROM OUR LOBBYIST: END OF LEGISLATIVE YEAR

HUMAN RESOURCES: WHAT HAPPENS TO FINAL WAGES WHEN AN EMPLOYEE PASSES AWAY?

MEMBER BENEFITS: MEMBER BENEFITS: OPEN ENROLLMENT IS UNDERWAY!

MEMBER BENEFITS: KEEP UP WITH THE WAGE & BENEFITS SURVEY – GET LIVE UPDATED INFORMATION!

 Services for Graphic Communications  
5800 S. Eastern Ave., #400  
Los Angeles, CA 90040

 NATIVE NEWS  
OCTOBER 20, 2025 | ISSUE 192