

MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY 2014

*A report highlighting and summarizing selected new legislation
related to the economic status of women*

Laws of Minnesota 2014	Subject	Synopsis
Chapter 99	Higher Education	Extends tuition freeze for another year at the state's public colleges and universities.
Chapter 166	Minimum Wage	Phased-in increase in minimum wage to \$9.50/hr. by August 1, 2016. Future increases indexed to inflation.
Chapter 177	Domestic Violence	Peace officers may arrest a person without a warrant if they have probable cause to believe that person committed domestic abuse within the preceding 72 hours. Current law has a 24-hour limit.
Chapter 188	Domestic Violence & Homeownership	Allows victims of domestic violence to terminate a rental lease. Establishes a pilot project to help Minnesota's communities of color and American Indians own homes.
Chapter 197	Child Custody	No presumption for or against joint custody, except in cases of domestic violence. Parents' disagreement over sole or joint custody does not mean they are unable to cooperate in the rearing of their children.
Chapter 212	Sexual Violence	Grants for support services to victims of sexual violence and to develop educational programs on the causes of and solutions to sexual violence. Develop recommendations for collection and reporting of statewide data on domestic abuse.
Chapter 213	Domestic Violence	Prohibits persons from possessing weapons if they are subject to domestic violence restraining orders. Must surrender their firearms if they have been convicted of domestic violence offenses.
Chapter 233	Gender Discrimination	Persons bringing a legal action concerning a violation of Minnesota's Human Rights Act are now entitled to a jury trial. In the past such action was limited to a judge without a jury.

Chapter 235	Nurses	Allows nurses more independence and responsibility in their practice. Eliminates current requirement that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) must work under written agreements with physicians regarding patient care and prescriptions. APRNs are now able to independently diagnose and treat illnesses, prescribe medication, interpret some diagnostic tests and work with other medical providers to provide patient care. Also expands what nurse midwives and nurse anesthetists are allowed to do.
Chapter 239	Women's Economic Security Act	See separate summary.
Chapter 242	Child Support	Clarifies statutory language re court-ordered child support to avoid another problem like this past February, when the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that, even though a Rochester man owed over \$83,000 for 11 years of failure to pay child support, he was not criminally accountable because he provided some level of "care" for his children, thus satisfying his legal obligation.
Chapter 247	School Therapists	Additional categories of school therapists may join teachers' collective bargaining unit: art therapist, music therapist, audiologists.
Chapter 253	Affirmative Action	State contracts for construction projects can only be awarded to private businesses that are "responsible contractors." The definition of "responsible contractor" excludes: • Businesses with repeated violations of affirmative action requirements for hiring minorities, women and qualified disabled persons. • Businesses with repeated violations of requirements that a certain percent of subcontractors be (a) targeted group businesses (owned by specific racial minorities, women, or qualified disabled persons), (b) Disadvantaged Businesses Enterprises (the business is located in or the owner resides in an "Economically Disadvantaged Area"), or (c) veteran-owned businesses.
Chapter 270	Sexual Violence	Increases penalties for certain criminal sexual offenders.

Chapter 272	Gender Discrimination/Teachers	Under current law, when a probationary teacher takes a maternity, paternity, or medical leave during her/his first three years of employment, a school district may make that teacher start the probationary period over again, because the leave disrupts the “consecutive” nature of the three years. This new law says that if the teacher resumes teaching within 12 months of when the leave began she/he is considered to have a consecutive teaching experience.
Chapter 291	Omnibus Health & Human Services Act	• Patients must be notified if their mammograms find them to have dense breasts. According to the Mayo Clinic, high breast density indicates an increased risk of developing breast cancer and makes it more difficult to interpret mammograms (potentially reducing the effectiveness of mammography in detecting breast cancer). • Hospitals must give written notice of victim rights and resources to sexual assault victims, ideally prior to medical treatment so that legal evidence can be gathered.
Chapter 308	Taxes	• One-time property tax relief for homeowners and renters. • A new “reading” tax credit for parents or guardians of student with certain disabilities such as dyslexia. Up to a \$2,000 tax credit for expenses such as tutoring. Total cost to state: \$2.8M. • An earlier (Chapter 150) tax bill gave an income tax cut for 2013 tax payments to more than one million state residents.
Chapter 312	Supplemental	• A 5% rate increase for home- and community-based caregivers of seniors (long-term care) and people with disabilities. • Improved access to educational opportunities for participants in MFIP. • A \$500,000 grant program for FY2015 to address health equity issues, with emphasis on refugee populations. Some of the grants must address health equity issues facing East African communities, be used for a conference focused on mental health in immigrant and refugee communities, and fund women's reproductive health and dementia outreach projects. • Narrowing the racial educational achievement gap: ○ Additional funding (\$4.6M) for early learning scholarships, and removal of the \$5,000

	Appropriations	cap on early learning scholarships. This should result in at least 1,000 more Minnesota children from low-income families receiving scholarships for high quality early education. - o Additional funding and improvements for English Language Learners. - o Reduced-price student lunches. • Housing for low income families and minorities. Funding for housing for low income and minorities. - o \$500,000 for FY 2014 and 2015 for transitional housing. - o \$28.4M in 2014 and 2015 for the economic development and housing program, to address the homeownership disparity rate between white households and American Indians and communities of color. \$500,000 of this is for homeownership opportunities for families evicted due to a disabled child in the home. • \$23M for a \$25/pupil increase in the general education formula. A total increase of \$54M for K-12 Education. • \$500,000 in FY2015 for community-based youth intervention programs for at-risk youth and their families. Must target \$100,000 to East African youth. • \$300,000 for sexual violence prevention. • “Safe Harbor Grants.” \$1M for services for youth who are sexually exploited. • \$500,000 in FY 2015 for emergency shelter for East African women and children who are victims of domestic abuse or trafficking.
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