

Trump to cut protections for home health aides, migrant farmworkers

The Labor Department unveiled an effort this week to eliminate over 60 regulations.

Today at 7:00 a.m. EDT



By [Lauren Kaori Gurley](#)

The U.S. Labor Department announced plans this week to slash more than 60 regulations — including eliminating overtime and minimum wage protections for home health care workers and union organizing rights for migrant farmworkers.

The effort to deregulate the federal agency that governs workers' rights and protections aims to deliver on President Donald Trump's promise to "restore American prosperity," the agency said.

"The Department of Labor is proud to lead the way by eliminating unnecessary regulations that stifle growth and limit opportunity," Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer said in a statement.

A rash of changes are being proposed at the Labor Department's workplace health and safety agencies. Those include changing employer reporting requirements for workers' musculoskeletal injuries as well as changes to rules that give labor officials the ability to penalize employers for failing to maintain a safe workplace.

The rule changes follow an executive order in January that directed agency leaders to cut 10 existing rules, regulations or guidance documents for every new one created. The Labor Department said Tuesday it is trying to reverse "costly and burdensome rules."

Chavez-DeRemer, a Republican former congresswoman from Oregon, earned bipartisan support during her confirmation this year in part due to endorsements from organized labor. Trump picked her for the Cabinet position after heavy lobbying from Teamsters President Sean O'Brien, who made inroads with the administration by speaking at the Republican National Convention.

The Labor Department is also proposing the cancellation of certain affirmative action requirements for registered apprenticeships. A draft of that rule says those requirements "conflict with merit principles" and "may potentially induce the illegal selection of apprentices based on race and sex."

Apprenticeships for America, a nonprofit that advocates for apprenticeships, said in a statement that “participation by women in apprenticeship continues to significantly lag that of men and participation rates for African Americans also trails.”

The administration also has plans to rescind an Obama-era rule that granted minimum wage and overtime pay to millions of in-home care workers. The Trump administration said in its proposed rulemaking that current regulations “might discourage essential companionship services by making these services more expensive.”

The agency also plans to revoke a Biden-era regulation protecting union organizing for seasonal farmworkers who are in the United States through the H-2A visa program. The Biden administration said the rule was designed to help foreign workers advocate for better working conditions. But the Trump administration said last month that revoking the rule aligned with the president’s “ongoing commitment to strictly enforcing U.S. immigration laws.”

So far, the Labor Department’s proposed rulemaking has not addressed hot-button issues surrounding independent contractors, prevailing wage standards, and sustainable and ethical retirement investing rules.

What readers are saying

The comments express strong disapproval of the Labor Department's decision to eliminate overtime and minimum wage protections for home health care workers. Many commenters criticize the move as cruel and detrimental to both workers and those who rely on their services, arguing it... [Show more](#)

This summary is AI-generated. AI can make mistakes and this summary is not a replacement for reading the comments.