



For Immediate Release: September 25, 2019

Trump Fails to Protect Colorado Workers

New Federal Rules Defining Overtime Rights are Insufficient for Colorado

Denver, Colorado – Yesterday, the Trump administration released a new rule that would fail to extend overtime protections to hundreds of thousands of Colorado workers. The Trump rule is a weak response to the quiet erosion of workers’ overtime rights over the past half century and is dramatically insufficient to protect the welfare of Colorado’s workers.

The Trump administration rule would allow employers to require salaried managers, administrators, and other professionals earning more than \$35,668 a year to work 50, 60 or 70 hours per week without paying them a cent more in overtime pay. The rule comes several years after the Obama administration proposed a different rule that would have set the minimum salary for overtime exempt employees at more than \$50,000 in 2020.

A \$35,668 salary threshold for overtime exempt professionals is insufficient to protect Colorado’s workers. Under the Trump rule, employers in Colorado could pay their managers and other professionals minimum wage while forcing them to work 55 hours a week without receiving any overtime. The \$35,668 threshold is also well below Colorado’s median income and self-sufficiency standards as outlined by the Colorado Center for Law and Policy. Under the Trump rule, working Coloradans would continue to be squeezed by longer working hours that take them away from their families and communities, all without access to one of the critical pillars of American workplace rights: overtime pay for excess hours.

In the absence of federal action, states must take the initiative to protect working families. That’s why the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) should adopt overtime rules that protect the health and welfare of our workforce and ensure only bona fide executives, administrators, and professionals can be exempt from overtime.

Colorado’s workers are asking CDLE to set a minimum salary threshold of 2.5 times the minimum wage — around \$62,000 in 2020, approximately the level of the Obama administration’s proposal, adjusted for the cost of living in the Western region. Employers would not need to pay all their managers this amount, but they would need to pay overtime to workers who don’t receive that pay. By adopting this rule, Colorado would extend overtime protections to over 280,000 Colorado workers who would be unprotected by the Trump rule.

As President Trump’s administration turns its back on working families, Governor Polis can step up and protect Colorado workers, their families, and their time by supporting state action on overtime. To learn more about why it’s time for Colorado to act, [visit the Bell Policy Center’s Overtime Hub](#).

Media Contact: Nina DiSalvo | Towards Justice | (970) 403-5694 | nina@towardsjustice.org