Hidden Labor in the Sunshine State: Protecting Florida's Domestic Workers

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Executive Summary

Florida has more than 112,000 domestic workers who care for and provide in-home cleaning services to families, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Domestic workers, despite being indispensable and a vital part of the state’s workforce, have for decades faced discrimination and numerous barriers to economic stability. COVID-19 and the subsequent financial fallout only exacerbated these inequities. Common roadblocks domestic workers face include meager wages, unsafe and unstable working conditions, scant benefits, and lack of state and federal protections afforded other working people.

Florida Policy Institute (FPI) took a deeper look into this essential workforce and found the following:

- Three in five domestic workers (60 percent) are immigrants, while just 26 percent of other working Floridians are.
- More than nine in 10 Florida domestic workers (94 percent) are women, while 47 percent of other working Floridians are.
- 46 percent of domestic workers in Florida are Latina/o and 24 percent are Black, while Latina/o and Black workers account for 28 percent and 15 percent of all other workers, respectively.
- Domestic workers’ median wage is roughly half the median wage of all other working Floridians.

To counter this historical discrimination, Florida lawmakers should enact a statewide domestic workers bill of rights, as at least nine other states and three cities have done over the past decade. Doing so would ensure that over 112,000 working Floridians:

- are paid a living wage and overtime;
- receive written contracts of their work arrangements;
- are protected from invasions of privacy and confidentiality violations; and
- can collectively bargain and weigh in on workplace policy decisions.

Importantly, such a measure must include all of Florida’s domestic workers, regardless of whether they have a documented immigration status.
Introduction

Domestic workers, who care for children and people with disabilities, keep homes tidy, and help older adults age in place, are needed now more than ever. Over 112,000 domestic workers provide these services in private homes throughout the state as nannies and other child care providers, direct care aides, and house cleaners. Most domestic workers in Florida are direct care aides (47 percent) or house cleaners (37 percent). In less than a decade, it is expected that care workers will comprise the largest share of workers in the nation as the Baby Boomer generation increasingly requires assistance to age at home. This reality can no longer be ignored in Florida, which has the third-highest share (over 21 percent) of adults age 65 and older in the nation.

Yet the care crisis has already arrived for domestic workers. As FPI and numerous others have highlighted, because domestic work occurs in private households outside of public view, these workers’ struggles and identities are often overlooked. Their work is “invisible work.” While this was true before the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become even more apparent since. Long taken for granted as so-called unskilled laborers, domestic workers are met with low pay and nonexistent benefits, and they are vulnerable to a range of abuse, wage theft, and labor trafficking. As a result, the turnover rate for this profession hovers above 65 percent.

This report includes four charts to help shed light on Florida’s domestic workforce. These visualizations demonstrate that women, immigrants, and Black and Latina Floridians disproportionately take on this work and earn well below a living wage.

1. Three out of every five domestic workers in Florida are immigrants.

While immigrants are overrepresented among domestic workers nationwide, in Florida this is especially pronounced, as 60.1 percent are born outside the United States. By contrast, just 26.3 percent of other working Floridians are immigrants. (See Figure 1.) Thus, even though Florida has a higher number of immigrant residents than most states, these proportions show that immigrants remain overrepresented in this work — that is, Florida’s large immigrant population is not the sole reason for its immigrant-heavy domestic workforce.
Almost a third (31.9 percent) of Florida’s domestic workers are not U.S. citizens, which includes those without a documented immigration status. Research shows that domestic workers without a documented immigration status are more likely to face low wages, wage theft, and abuse on the job than those with a documented status. Given these workers’ precarious statuses, they also have few options to redress workplace concerns.

Immigrant domestic workers also suffered disproportionately during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just as other working people lost their jobs, so did droves of domestic workers, except many were given little to no notice or assurance of paid time off or unemployment benefits. An estimated 25 percent of Spanish-speaking domestic workers across the country were unemployed in 2021, compared to just 9 percent before the pandemic.

Unemployed immigrants who are undocumented and those living with someone who lacks a documented immigration status (i.e., mixed-status households) were doubly disadvantaged, as many were sidelined from federal COVID-19 relief. On the other hand, those domestic workers who continued working faced significant health and safety risks on the job, given that the field is unbound by most federal workplace safety laws.
2. Domestic workers are overwhelmingly women.

Statewide, 94 percent of domestic workers are women, while just 47 percent of other working Floridians are. This is slightly higher than the national rate of women domestic workers (91 percent). (See Figure 2.) Women being overrepresented in domestic service primarily reflects gender norms dating back to the 19th century that stigmatized housework and child care as “women’s work.”

![Figure 2. More Than 9 in 10 Domestic Workers are Women](chart)

Before the Industrial Revolution, men and women conducted a much more even share of domestic duties. However, once work outside the home (including office work) became more common for men, women found themselves doing most of the child-rearing, cooking, and cleaning. This is where the rise in professional domestic work took off in earnest, as middle-income women hired other women to do housework they no longer wanted to do.14

The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated how pervasive these gender norms are. When the nation went into quarantine and businesses — including child and direct home care providers — scaled back or closed their doors, women overwhelmingly resumed the brunt of household labor, many doing so while still trying to hold down part- and full-time jobs. A December 2020 survey of working Floridians found that 73 percent of mothers faced child care issues that affected their ability to work during the pandemic, while less than half of fathers echoed the same concerns.15 This trend negatively impacted domestic workers as their agencies shuttered and many private clients abruptly let them go, no longer needing or able to afford their services.16
3. Most domestic workers are Latina/o and Black.

Figure 3 illustrates that 46.3 percent of Florida’s domestic workers are Latina/o, while these workers comprise only 28 percent of the remaining state workforce. Latina/o Floridians are especially likely to work as nannies and house cleaners. Black Floridians are also overrepresented in domestic work, comprising 24.1 percent of Florida’s domestic workers compared to 15.4 percent of the rest of the state workforce. Black Floridians are most likely to work as direct care aides, who may provide personal or home health care, depending on their qualifications. Personal care aides assist people with activities of daily living, including getting dressed, walking, bathing, and preparing meals. While home health aides may also provide personal care, they are additionally qualified to provide health care services, including administering medication and caring for wounds.17

The complex intersection of race, gender, and immigration status explains why people of color — especially women and immigrants — are more likely to work in domestic service than their peers. While women of color were always a significant part of domestic work due to the enduring legacy of slavery, the field was once much more diverse. Before the end of the Civil War, nearly half of U.S.-born white women were employed in domestic work. By 1920, less than 10 percent still were.18
As the Industrial Revolution leveraged new opportunities for white women (both immigrants and non-immigrants), they began to look down upon and distance themselves from domestic work. Meanwhile, the share of Black women in domestic work — lacking similar opportunities and stamped by society as “ideal domestic servants” — quickly surpassed other women’s stake in the field. At the same time, Latinas, especially in the Southwest, began entering the domestic workforce in increasing numbers. By the time the Roosevelt Administration enacted the National Labor Relations Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1935 and 1938, respectively, the racialized nature of domestic work was cemented. As a result, while millions of Americans were bestowed protections like a minimum wage, along with the ability to unionize and receive overtime, domestic workers were left out. Advocates have made some gains since, including securing most domestic workers’ right to the minimum wage; however, domestic workers are still excluded from far too many labor protections.

Since the 1960s, further denigration of domestic work meant that immigrant-born Black and Latina women became much more prominent in domestic work than their U.S.-born peers of color. This trend endured and is reflected heavily in Florida’s current domestic workforce.

4. Florida’s domestic workers do not earn a living wage.

The median hourly pay for domestic workers in Florida is $11.85. By comparison, the rest of Florida's workforce earns a median wage of $19.13, which is 47 percent more than domestic workers. (See Figure 4.) This occupational wage gap persists, even when education level and demographic factors (e.g., age, race, immigration status) are accounted for.

It is important to put this wage data into context. In Florida, this wage does not equate to a living wage for any full-time worker (whether they have children or not, or are single or living with dual incomes). Even among two-income households with no children, $11.85 falls $1.30 short of a living hourly wage. In reality, those in domestic service often cannot secure consistent, full-time hours despite the desire to (known as involuntary part-time). Lower hourly pay coupled with this involuntary part-time status means, on the whole, domestic workers earn significantly less annually than the rest of the workforce.
Although Florida’s minimum wage increase to $15 by 2026 will reduce pay disparities for Floridians of color and women, the exact number of domestic workers to benefit cannot be easily quantified. (See Methodological notes.) Those earning near the $11.85 median domestic worker wage will not directly benefit from Florida’s minimum wage increase until at least September 2023, when it reaches $12 per hour. Even those who stand to benefit from the wage jump to $11 per hour this September will only move marginally closer to a living wage.

**Policy Recommendation: Enact a Florida Domestic Workers Bill of Rights**

Advocates and experts alike have been calling for the elevation of domestic work for decades. Given the emotional and physical toll that this work can take, combined with the low pay, limited benefits, and added hardships that domestic workers’ intersectional statuses may bring, it is no wonder the care economy is in crisis. As these realities have remained essentially unchanged over the past 50 years, direct policy intervention is long overdue.

Florida policymakers should — absent federal action — introduce a state domestic workers bill of rights, as several cities and states have successfully done since 2010. (See Figure 5.) Inaction will
not only continually harm domestic workers; it will, over time, dramatically sabotage the state’s long-term care capabilities, particularly for Florida’s outsized older adult population.

Enacting protections for domestic workers would result in substantial benefits for the Sunshine State — it would empower Florida’s existing domestic workers, reduce home care turnover, attract new workers to meet rising care demands, reduce the harms of longstanding racial and gender discrimination, and strengthen the state economy.

Key Provisions

Based on prior domestic worker organizing efforts that narrowed the gaps in state and federal protections, FPI recommends the provisions below be included in Florida’s domestic workers bill of rights.

1. Explicit Worker Power

The current state of Florida’s domestic workforce is the result of decades of policy choices that either directly or indirectly marginalized women, immigrants, and people of color, so any solutions to address these harms must prioritize their input. Indeed, many of the original exclusions from worker protections, like the right to a minimum wage, were reversed in the 1970s thanks to the decades-long organizing and advocacy efforts of countless domestic workers, many of whom were immigrants and Black women.

Some examples of domestic worker input might include:

- opinions on policy proposals via legislative testimony
- contributing to draft legislation and amendments
- consulting with worker centers and nonprofits representing or serving domestic workers to broker relationships between policymakers and workers throughout the state

Additional vehicles for input are standards boards or community advisory groups that ensure a mix of domestic workers, employers, labor representatives, and nonprofit providers. This type of sectoral bargaining is present in other cities and states with bills of rights, holding state policymakers accountable and monitoring policy implementation for areas of improvement. Florida should follow suit.

Finally, worker power is greatest when employees have opportunities to join unions and collectively bargain. The 1935 National Labor Relations Act granted workers the right to organize via unions and collectively bargain (i.e., negotiate pay and other workplace conditions as a group). Still, as with the
FLSA, domestic workers were deliberately sidelined when this federal legislation was passed. Explicit state protections will help fill lingering gaps.

Most domestic workers’ bills of rights throughout the country do not include provisions for collective bargaining. However, a small number (e.g., Illinois, New York) call for pilot and feasibility studies on the issue. Florida can be a leader in this space and undo domestic workers’ historical disempowerment by explicitly stating their organizing and bargaining rights at the state level.

For all the provisions that follow, enforcement is paramount, so as appropriate, Florida should look to other bills of rights to model ways for workers to redress grievances without fear of having their immigration status used against them — not only concerning pay, but also harassment, discrimination, and invasions of privacy. A statewide domestic workers hotline with multilingual staff housed within a trusted non-governmental organization that serves immigrant and domestic workers may be an ideal vehicle. The federal Domestic Workers Bill of Rights calls for a similar nationwide hotline.

2. **Inclusive Definitions of “Domestic Work” and “Domestic Worker”**

Florida should define domestic work as broadly as possible so that the most workers benefit, mirroring the International Labour Organization’s definition. (See Inclusive Definitions callout box.) Anyone who regularly provides services within or at a household, whether part-time or full-time, via an agency or non-agency, must be included.

A state domestic workers bill of rights should minimize carve-outs and exemptions, as exclusions in existing

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**ELENA’S* STORY**

_Elena filed a complaint against her employer with Miami Workers Center**_

I used to work [as a house cleaner] for a company and left because there was always mistreatment and humiliation and I got tired of it and quit. The company owed me a week of pay for work and did not want to give it to me...it took more than a year to be able to file a lawsuit because my old employer hired lawyers to delay the process. He even called me to try to intimidate me with threats of deportation, knowing that I am an immigrant. He sent me a check that was less than what I was owed and I didn’t accept it.

On the first court date, my employer did not show up so we thought we had finally won. Instead, my employer’s lawyer tried to intimidate me and make me out to be a liar. In the end, we won the case with the support of Miami Workers Center...I want other workers to know that with or without papers, they have the right to recover their wages. And now I know the value of my work and it cannot be taken from me.

*Name has been changed to protect the identity of the complainant

**The Miami Workers Center, a Florida affiliate of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, primarily serves immigrants of color, including those in the domestic workforce. The account above is from a current client (used with her permission). It was provided to FPI via email on October 17, 2022.
policies are mainly responsible for inadequate worker protections in the workforce today. For example, Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, landmark legislation to mitigate discrimination in the workplace, does not apply to employers with fewer than 15 employees. The reasoning behind this was that including small businesses would allegedly create an administrative burden. As such, domestic workers employed by small business owners who are sexually harassed or the target of prejudicial treatment are not protected by federal law. Florida should avoid any similar small-firm exemption, as treating employees fairly and respectfully and affording them power in the workplace must be universal.

Moreover, the distinction between a domestic worker who is an independent contractor versus an employee should be made clear. Independent contractors are not entitled to the same workplace rights as employees (e.g., unemployment insurance, overtime), and Florida defers to the FLSA definition of employee for several of its labor-related policies. Some states with bills of rights set a floor for the minimum number of weekly or monthly hours a worker must provide services to be defined as a domestic worker. However, what is more salient than simply hours worked is the power a worker has over their day-to-day employment arrangement. An actual independent contractor is someone who can control certain aspects of their work, like hours, what materials and equipment to use, or how/when/where they will carry out the work. Most domestic workers do not fall under this definition, yet copious evidence points to the fact that up to 20 percent of employers have misclassified one or more of their employees as independent contractors.

For example, a worker who provides residential lawn care and owns the lawn care business may be defined as an independent contractor; too often, however, non-owner workers who are employed seasonally or contractually by an agency are classified as independent contractors by their employers, even though the workers have little to no control over their hours, pay, or work conditions. Domestic workers are especially prone to this.

3. *Written Contracts or Agreements*

Domestic workers are subject to exploitative workplace practices like long, unpredictable hours, last-minute cancellations, major shifts in job requirements, and abrupt terminations. These practices
disempower workers and put the vulnerable clients many domestic workers serve (i.e., children, older adults) at risk through inconsistent or lack of quality care.

Having a written agreement between employers and domestic workers can help mitigate this. This agreement will not look the same for every worker and can bend to the varied settings, hours, and employers for which they work. Still, having such a document gives domestic workers the power to hold employers accountable if they exhibit exploitative behavior, and it can also strengthen workers’ legal cases if an employer fails to address these conditions.

Several localities that have expanded domestic worker protections offer a template on their government websites for employers to customize. (See Attachment 1.) Florida should plan for the same and publish it in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, three of Florida’s most commonly spoken languages.

4. Minimum Domestic Worker Wage

Ensuring that most domestic workers were no longer excluded from minimum wage protections under the FLSA was a significant achievement by workers and advocates in the 1970s. Yet those providing companionship services for people unable to care for themselves are still not fully included in minimum wage protections, despite many of these workers providing intimate and personalized care to a growing older adult population. Furthermore, while the FLSA defines the minimum wage as a floor intended to provide a “standard of living necessary for health, efficiency, and general well-being of workers,” years without increases and rising inflation have widened the gap between the minimum wage and a living wage throughout the country.

As such, lawmakers should consider setting a minimum domestic worker wage above the statewide minimum wage, one in line with a living wage throughout Florida. Notably, Florida indirectly upped a small segment of domestic workers’ pay recently, mandating that direct care workers employed by Medicaid service providers be paid $15 per hour starting in fiscal year 2022-23. While this is a positive change, it was only done in anticipation of Amendment 2’s gradual rise to $15. Without an industry-specific wage, these workers will soon be right back where they started — earning at or just slightly above the minimum wage and nowhere near a living wage. By contrast, New York recently passed legislation requiring home health care employers that are Medicaid service providers to pay their employees an additional $3.22 to $4.09 per hour on top of the minimum wage rate.
Moreover, the state’s accelerated increase to $15 only benefits a small number of domestic workers, as many more work for corporations or nonprofits who do not receive Medicaid funding. Without further intervention, most domestic workers will be relegated to lower pay until the state minimum wage increases or their employers voluntarily decide to increase hourly rates.

Florida lawmakers have set industry-specific pay floors before (e.g., paying new teachers a minimum of $48,000 annually), so they can do so for others. Thus, Florida has the precedent and means necessary to make this happen for all domestic workers, publicly contracted and privately employed alike.

5. Overtime Protections

Another win domestic workers secured was amending federal labor laws to allow many domestic workers to receive overtime pay. However, a carve-out remains for live-in domestic workers — employers are not legally required to pay live-in domestic workers overtime, no matter how many hours or consecutive days they work. This exemption allows abusive employers to overwork and exhaust domestic workers and commit wage theft (i.e., failing to pay workers for their labor).

Florida’s domestic workers bill of rights should explicitly state that all domestic workers are legally entitled to at least time and a half pay for hours worked over 40 hours per week, matching federal overtime protections other employees receive. Most cities and states that have passed bills of rights include such provisions.

6. Paid Leave

Florida’s domestic workers bill of rights should explicitly state that all domestic workers are legally entitled to at least time and a half pay for hours worked over 40 hours per week, matching federal overtime protections other employees receive.

Florida's caregivers cannot serve others adequately if they are unable to care for themselves. Domestic workers who get sick or need time to attend to their own children and families should not have to fear losing their jobs and hard-earned pay for circumstances beyond their control. Failing to provide paid leave is unfair to Floridians and pushes them closer to burnout in a profession that already has a 65 percent turnover rate. Moreover, incentivizing a sick or impaired employee to work in order to maintain their income or employment can have dangerous consequences for the vulnerable people (i.e., children, those with disabilities, older adults with high needs) who many Florida domestic workers serve.
Because there are no federal laws mandating paid leave for employees — including domestic workers — most of the localities with domestic workers bills of rights have a provision for a paid leave minimum (e.g., Chicago, Connecticut, Hawaii, New York, Nevada, Oregon, and Philadelphia). Florida’s bill of rights should do the same by specifying a minimum number of paid days off per year that employers of both full- and part-time domestic workers must provide. As it stands, Florida does not require any employers to provide paid leave and worse, preempts cities and counties from passing their own policies.43

7. Confidentiality and Right to Privacy

By its very definition, domestic work occurs within the privacy of people’s homes. While this is convenient for those needing services and allows for a personalized experience, hidden workplaces without strong regulations make it much easier for abusive employers (or their clients in the case of agency-based domestic work) to control domestic workers’ livelihoods. Domestic workers may be coerced into forfeiting their identification (e.g., passports, birth certificates, and driver’s licenses), and workers complain of being spied on or stalked both on and off the job.44 Immigrants (who comprise 60 percent of Florida’s domestic workforce) and live-in workers are especially vulnerable to this type of exploitation.

To prevent these intrusions, several states (e.g., Connecticut and Massachusetts) and cities (e.g., Philadelphia and Seattle) include provisions in their domestic workers bills of rights that spell out the right to privacy and confidentiality. Florida should adopt model provisions stipulating that employers cannot:

- hold onto domestic workers’ documents or belongings
- monitor or record workers’ private living or sleeping areas without permission
- interfere with or monitor workers’ private communications (e.g., phone calls, emails, social media)
- threaten a worker based on their immigration status

Because so many domestic workers are immigrants and some may lack a documented status, it is imperative that any statewide bill of rights makes clear that workers’ immigration status can and will not be used against them if they report issues with their employers to the state. Every provision must be applied as equitably as possible so that all domestic workers, including the most vulnerable to exploitation and retaliation, can benefit from these expanded protections.
Alternative: Federal Domestic Workers Bill of Rights Act

Without state legislation, Florida’s Congressional delegation can address these longstanding inequities by co-sponsoring the National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and encouraging their peers to put domestic workers on the agenda. The measure, reintroduced in July 2021\textsuperscript{45}, would mandate written contracts of scheduled hours and time off for each employee, including meal and rest breaks, paid overtime, and sick days. The legislation also includes protections against harassment and discrimination, authorizes workers to bargain collectively, creates a National Domestic Workers Hotline, and establishes a federal domestic worker task force, among other provisions. Notably, the legislation would protect all domestic workers, even if workers are immigrants without a documented legal status. The legislation is driven by domestic workers throughout the nation, including members of the National Domestic Workers Alliance.\textsuperscript{46} As of November 15, 2022, the bill has not been sponsored by either of Florida’s U.S. Senators; however, it has been co-sponsored by seven out of Florida’s 28 U.S. Representatives in the House.

Special thanks to Miami Workers Center for contributing clients’ personal stories and Economic Policy Institute for microdata analysis assistance.

Methodological Notes

- All wage data is inflation-adjusted to 2021 values based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI-R-S). Wages include overtime, tips, and commission from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) Outgoing Rotation Group pooled 2017-2021 data. Domestic workers who offer child care in their own homes were excluded, as the CPS does not have robust wage data available for self-employed workers.

- *Domestic workers* are defined using the Census Bureau’s occupation and industry classification system. They comprise four categories of workers: maids and housekeeping cleaners (occupation code 4230 and industry code 9290); nannies (occupation code 4600 and industry codes 9290 or 7580); providers of childcare in their own home (occupation code 4600 and industry code 8470); and home care or direct care aides. This includes non-agency-based home care aides who are paid directly by clients (occupation codes 3601, 3602, 3604, 3605, and 4610 and industry codes 9290 and 7580) and agency-based home care aides who are part of a larger practice (occupation codes 3601, 3602, 3604, 3605, and 4610 and industry codes 8170 and 8370).

- *Direct or home care aides* include both home health and personal care aides. Personal care aides assist older adults and those with disabilities with activities of daily living, including...
getting dressed, walking, bathing, and preparing meals. Home health aides may also provide personal care but are additionally qualified to provide health care services, including administering medication and caring for wounds.
Attachment 1. Excerpt From a Sample Domestic Worker Contract

This agreement is between ________ employer’s name ________ ("the Employer") and ________ worker’s name ________ ("the Employee"). The Employee shall begin work for the Employer on ________ start date ________. The place of work is the Employer’s residence, located at ________ employer’s address ________.

I. Work Responsibilities
   a. The Employee’s job title is ________ (e.g. Nanny, Housecleaner, Elder Caregiver) ________.
   b. The Employee is a live-in / live-out (circle one).
   c. The Employee agrees to perform the following duties as a requirement of her employment: (Be as specific as possible)
      • e.g. Care for one child (Sam Jones, boy, age 8).
      • e.g. Pick Sam up from school in the afternoons and care for him until the Employer gets home; prepare dinner for Sam on Tuesdays.
      • e.g. light housekeeping (limited to cleaning kitchen after use and tidying Sam’s play area).

   Any additional responsibilities must be negotiated in a separate writing, along with additional pay.

II. Scheduling, Cancellations, and Records
   a. The following represents a typical weekly work schedule. The Employer will limit fluctuations and will provide as much notice of change as possible. Additional hours must be negotiated verbally or in writing, along with additional pay.

   □ Sat Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Sun Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Mon Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Tue Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Wed Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Thurs Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______
   □ Fri Begin: _____ am/pm End: _____ am/pm Daily Hours ______

   Total weekly hours: ________

   b. In the event of any cancellation of hours in the typical work schedule on the Employer’s part, the Employee will be paid as usual for all regular work hours.


2 Economic Policy Institute analysis provided for author in August 2022, based on U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey pooled 2017-2021 data. See Methodology notes for further detail.


9 “Non-citizen” refers to a subset of workers falling under the U.S. Census Bureau category of “foreign-born.” It includes, but is not limited to, refugees, asylees, lawful permanent residents (a.k.a. “green card holders”), and those without a documented immigration status. It does not include immigrants who have become naturalized U.S. citizens.


13 Burnham and Theodore, 2012

18 Branch and Wooten
19 Branch and Wooten
21 Burnham and Theodore
22 Romero
24 Julia Wolfe, Jori Kandra, Lora Engdahl, and Heidi Shierholz, 2020
26 Kashen
31 U.S. Department of Labor, 2022
33 Premilla Nadasen, 2012
35 29 U.S.C. § 202(a)
36 Amy K. Glasmeier, 2022
In the 2022-23 General Appropriations Act, Florida mandated that most state employees and select subcontractors be paid a $15 minimum wage, four years ahead of when the rest of Florida’s employers have to comply with Amendment 2. One of the subcontracted groups to benefit from the state speeding up the minimum wage timeline is direct care staff working for Medicaid providers, which includes those providing home health and some personal care services. See Laws of Florida, Chapter 2021-36.


Fla. Stat. § 1011.62(14)

29 U.S.C. § 213(b)(21)


U.S. Department of Labor, “Leave Benefits,” https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave. The Dept. Of Labor defers paid leave policies to employers, which has exacerbated vulnerability among domestic workers. Their website states, “The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not require payment for time not worked, such as personal leave, vacations, sick leave, or federal or other holidays. These benefits are generally a matter of agreement between an employer and an employee (or the employee's representative).” The Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA) only mandates unpaid work for up to 12 weeks and only for public workers or private companies with 50 or more employees. Many domestic worker employers do not meet this requirement.

https://1.next.westlaw.com/Link/Document/FullText?findType=L&pubNum=1000006&cite=FLSTS218.077&originatingDoc=ld0e5c811d2f811e498db8b09b4f043e0&refType=LO&originationContext=document&transitionType=PLDocumentLink&billingHash=6838BE966FD1EB9659F3492B6771984357DF816968F1561A8AD16F7EE6F85C21&ppcid=8d2daaeff9964b609fcc4bb6ce70988b&contextData=(sc.Search)§ 218.077

Alexandra Mateescu, “Nannies already felt like they were under constant surveillance. The Internet has made it even worse,” Slate, August 13, 2018, https://slate.com/human-interest/2018/08/nannies-are-under-constant-surveillance-online-care-sites-are-making-it-worse.html.

