Summary and Fiscal Note

1. Legislation Summary

Department: Office of Labor Standards

Title: An ordinance relating to domestic worker labor standards in Seattle; amending Sections 14.23.010, 14.23.020, and 14.23.095 of the Seattle Municipal Code, and adding new Sections 14.23.025, 14.23.127, and 14.23.128 to the Seattle Municipal Code, to: establish written agreement requirement; establish protections for entitled paid and unpaid leave, including retaliation protection for taking permissible time off; require hiring entities to create and retain records; add advance notice of termination requirement; update remedies provisions; and conform to certain changes in state law and with City labor standards.

Background: Seattle was the first city in the nation to pass a domestic workers bill of rights, the Domestic Workers Ordinance (DWO), in 2019, which also created the Domestic Workers Standards Board (DWSB) with the authority to provide further policy recommendations to the City regarding labor standards for domestic workers.

Seattle's current Domestic Worker Ordinance (SMC 14.23), effective July 1, 2019 establishes:

- Minimum wage
- Meal and paid rest breaks
- Right to keep their personal documents and possessions
- Right to a day of rest for live-in domestic workers
- Retaliation protections including immigration status

Based on DWSB recommendations and to conform with certain changes in state law, OLS proposes the following amendments:

1. Require written agreements between hiring entity and domestic worker;
2. Establish protections for entitled leave, including retaliation protection for taking permissible time off;
3. Require hiring entities to track and retain payment records;
4. Require advance notice of termination; and
5. Update remedies provisions, including aligning language for civil penalties and fines with other City labor standards.

Domestic workers working for a hiring entity at least four hours per month have protections under the state law. This means a domestic worker can rotate in and out of coverage throughout the year. OLS does not have a coverage threshold; casual work is excluded.

Topic	Seattle DWO	State Law	DWO Amendment Expands or Aligns with State Law
Written Agreements	Not mandated	Requires written agreement to include: rate of pay and terms of services	Expand require written agreement and expand to include additional terms of work, such as location and any additional benefits
Hiring Entity Records Retention	Not mandated	Requires hiring entity create and maintain records documenting hours worked, rate of pay, and if applicable, leave time earned and used.	Expand Require rate of pay, hours, plus any other records related to written agreement
Retaliation Protections for Time Off	Not mandated	N/A	Expand No retaliation language for taking unpaid time off in state law. Domestic workers that are employees covered under state PSSL

Termination Advance Notice	Not mandated	Requires hiring entities provide two-week termination notice (four weeks for live-in)	Align
OLS Enforcement Code	No specific remedies for violations listed	N/A State law requires $1,000 civil penalty to WA Labor and Industries department	N/A Add specific remedies (i.e., include inflation adjustments[1] and add fines) for each aggrieved party

Summary Attachments:

---

2. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

☐ Yes

☒ No

---

[1] See OLS Memo: REVISED 2026 annual increases to Seattle minimum wage and labor standards penalties, fines.

3. Summary of Financial Implications

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?

☐ Yes

☒ No

3d. Other Financial Impacts

a. Does this legislation create any other financial impacts for The City of Seattle, such as direct or indirect costs, one-time or ongoing, that aren't mentioned above? If yes, please explain these impacts.

This legislation does not create any other financial impacts for the City.

b. If the legislation has costs that can be covered within the current budget, explain how. Does the department have extra resources in its budget to handle these costs? Or does the department need to shift resources away from other work to handle these costs?

OLS expects to spend approximately $9,000 on implementation costs such as interpretation for rulemaking and stakeholder compensation. This will be absorbed within the department's existing budget with no service impacts. In 2026, OLS has had higher than expected vacancies, so one-time salary savings are available to cover this minimal cost.

c. What financial costs or other impacts might happen if this legislation is not implemented?

This legislation is in part, intended to conform with recent changes in the recently passed state law. There will be inconsistent jurisdiction implementation and enforcement if this legislation is not implemented.

d. How might this legislation affect other City departments besides the one that proposed it?

N/A

4. Other Impacts

a. Does this legislation require a public hearing?

☒ Yes

☐ No

b. Does this legislation require a notice to be published in The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times?

☐ Yes

☒ No

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

☐ Yes

☒ No

d. Race and Social Justice Initiative impacts:

1. How does this legislation affect vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you come to this conclusion? Please consider both impacts within City government (like employees and internal programs) and in the broader community.

Domestic workers continue to be disproportionately Black, brown, women, immigrant and often have another language other than English as their primary language

2. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses used to develop or assess this legislation.

N/A

3. What is the Language Access Plan for communicating with the public about this legislation?

Our office provides translated materials in over 20 languages. The Domestic Workers Standards Board is interpreted in three languages: English, Spanish and Ukrainian. In partnership with the Board, OLS will create educational and

promotional materials / website changes available in our standard languages and support with interpretation for live or recorded education materials.

e. Climate change impacts:

1. Emissions: Will this legislation significantly increase or decrease carbon emissions? Attach any studies or materials that inform your answer.

N/A

2. Resiliency: Will this legislation make Seattle more or less able to adapt to climate change? If it reduces resiliency, explain what can be done to lessen the impact.

N/A

f. If this legislation creates a new program or expands an existing one, what are the long-term, measurable goals? How will this legislation help achieve those goals? What methods will be used to track progress?

N/A

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP that involves shared funding with a non-City partner or organization?

N/A