



Support the Administrative Rules for Initiative 124!

In November 2016, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved Initiative 124, the Seattle Hotel Employees Health and Safety Initiative which includes protections from sexual harassment and assault and workplace injury and improves access to affordable family healthcare and job security for hotel workers.

On April 9, the City of Seattle released proposed administrative rules for the initiative for public comment. The rules reflect a months-long stakeholder process that included significant input from hotel workers and worker advocates.

UNITE HERE Local 8, the hotel and hospitality workers' union, is supportive of the proposed rules and is urging the City to adopt them without substantive changes.

Representatives of hotel employers have argued for rules that would undercut workers' ability to access affordable family healthcare and create loopholes in the workload limits for hotel housekeepers.

We need to show the Office of Labor Standards our support so nothing in the proposed rules is watered down. **Show your support for hotel workers and Initiative 124 by submitting a comment!**

The comment period for the proposed administrative rules will close on Monday, April 23, 2018 at 5pm.

You can submit comments via [Local 8's Action Network page](#) or directly to Jenee Jahn, OLS Policy Analyst, by emailing jenee.jahn@seattle.gov or calling 206-256-5297.



The full draft of the Seattle Office of Labor Standards Chapter 150 Administrative Rules for the Hotel Employees Health and Safety Initiative can be found [here](#).

Below are some talking points on the proposed rules that you can use in making your comment.

The proposed rules for the Seattle Hotel Employees Health and Safety Initiative released on April 9 should be adopted in substantially the same form as published for comment.

The proposed rules reflect the language and intent of the initiative as drafted by worker advocates and approved overwhelmingly by Seattle voters in November 2016.

The proposed rules incorporate feedback from dozens of hotel workers who participated in the City's rulemaking process alongside worker advocates and hotel employer representatives.

The proposed rules affirm key provisions of the initiative which reflect the following values we share:

- **Trust women.** *Workers who come forward to report sexual harassment or assault should be believed. Responses to sexual harassment or assault should center the needs of the worker for safety and support, and reflect their awareness of the severity of the incident and the ongoing risk posed to others.* The proposed rules allow workers experiencing harassment or assault paid time to contact the police as well as a counselor of their choosing. The rules also restate workers' right to register sworn accusations of harassment or assault against guests, upon which hotel management then has an obligation to act.
- **Work is work.** *All work should be compensated and completed under safe conditions. Any cleaning conducted by hotel housekeepers takes a physical toll on their bodies and depletes their time, energy, and capacity to safely complete additional work.* The proposed rules limit potential loopholes to the 5,000 square foot workload limit for housekeepers, offering the narrowest possible exemption for non-cleaning tasks. The rules also require that workers be given advanced notice of their work assignments and must consent to taking on additional work for additional pay.
- **Healthcare is a human right.** *Low-wage hotel employees should have the ability to access affordable family medical coverage, whether through the Washington Health Benefit Exchange or through their employer.* The proposed rules further clarify that hotel employers must pay additional compensation to low-wage employees reflective of the cost of family medical coverage unless they are paying towards a gold-level equivalent healthcare plan that is affordable and covers the employee and any spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children.
- **Job security promotes community stability.** *No one should lose their jobs simply because the building they work in has changed ownership or management, or their work has been subcontracted. Stable, long-term employment allows workers to achieve wage growth and career advancement and supports workplace democracy.* The proposed rules detail the process for extending new offers of employment to existing workers due to a change in control and provide a definition of "just cause" to limit unfair firings during transition periods.

- **No one should work in fear.** *No worker should face retaliation for exercising their rights on the job. Retaliation has lasting chilling effects and can be most damaging for workers who are already marginalized within the workplace due to immigration status or other identity.* The proposed rules specify what notice must be provided to hotel workers about their rights under Seattle law, including their right to be protected from retaliation. The rules also restate the requirement that these notifications be provided in language and offer additional guidance for determining whether or not retaliation has taken place.

A year before #MeToo shed new light on workplace sexual harassment and assault, Seattle workers and voters led the way by passing a piece of legislation that holistically addresses workplace health and safety issues most impacting women, immigrants, refugees, and people of color working in hotels.

The proposed rules issued by the Office of Labor Standards are an important step in furthering the potential of the underlying initiative to protect Seattle hotel workers from sexual harassment, assault, and workplace injury and to expand access to affordable healthcare and job security.

As OLS moves forward with drafting accompanying Frequently Asked Questions, the FAQs should provide additional clarification of 1) the required functions of a panic button and 2) the definition of hotel employee - so that workers and employers can move forward with a shared understanding of which devices are sufficient and which employees are covered by the provisions of the law.