

Introducing the County of San Mateo Office of Labor Standards & Enforcement

North Fair Oaks Community Council
May 22, 2025



COUNTY OF **SAN MATEO**
OFFICE OF LABOR STANDARDS
AND ENFORCEMENT
OFICINA DE NORMAS LABORALES
Y CUMPLIMIENTO

Introduction

The Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) works to advance fair labor practices throughout San Mateo County.

Universal goals

We envision a San Mateo County where:

- All workers are **paid a fair wage** and treated respectfully.
- Responsible employers are **not undercut** by competitors who don't follow the law.



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Outline

- **The problem: Why OLSE?**
- **The solution: Our approach**
- **Project phases**
- **Resources for learning more**



The problem: Why OLSE?

- **Wage theft is common in CA**

- Every year, low-road employers steal up to **\$4.6 billion** from California workers*
- About **12%** of California workers experience wage theft each year*
- In San Mateo County, workers are owed **over \$4 million** in unpaid wage theft judgments alone**

Wage theft includes

- **Minimum wage** violations
- **Overtime** violations
- **Off-the-clock** work
- Illegal **deductions**
- Failure to pay **sick leave**
- Any other failure to fully pay an employee for their work

Sources

*Workplace Justice Lab @ Rutgers University, "Wage Theft in California: Minimum Wage Violations, 2014-2023" (May 2024), [available online](#).

**OLSE review of California Labor Commissioner judgment data. Original data available for download [here](#).



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The problem: Why OLSE?

- **Wage theft harms workers and employers**

- Low-wage workers in our region **lose over \$4,000 per year** to wage theft*
- Women, people of color, and immigrants experience most harm*
- **Responsible employers** are undercut by competitors who unfairly reduce their costs by exploiting workers.

- **Current remedies are inadequate**

- Workers seeking justice through the California Labor Commissioner face **major delays**, often waiting 5+ years only to be unable to collect
- Lawsuits are costly, time-consuming, and **inaccessible** to many workers

Sources

*Workplace Justice Lab @ Rutgers University, "Wage Theft in California: Minimum Wage Violations, 2014-2023" (May 2024), [available online](#).



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The solution: our approach

OLSE offers:

- **Confidential Labor Advice Hotline**, operated by our partner **Step Forward Foundation**.
 - Staffed by multilingual attorneys with expertise in employment law.
 - For workers: advice, resources, help filing claims with OLSE and other government agencies.
 - For employers: support understanding and complying with workplace obligations.
- **Complaint investigation and enforcement.**
 - Violations of the County of San Mateo's Minimum Wage Ordinance and minimum wage ordinances of San Mateo County cities that have contracted with OLSE for enforcement.
 - If violations are confirmed, OLSE will work to achieve a just resolution and compliance.
- **Education and technical assistance.**
 - Outreach in collaboration with trusted community partners.
 - Information, materials, and tools to support compliance.



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Our approach: the OLSE team

County Executive's Office

- Partnership coordination
- Outreach and education
- Special enforcement initiatives

County Attorney's Office

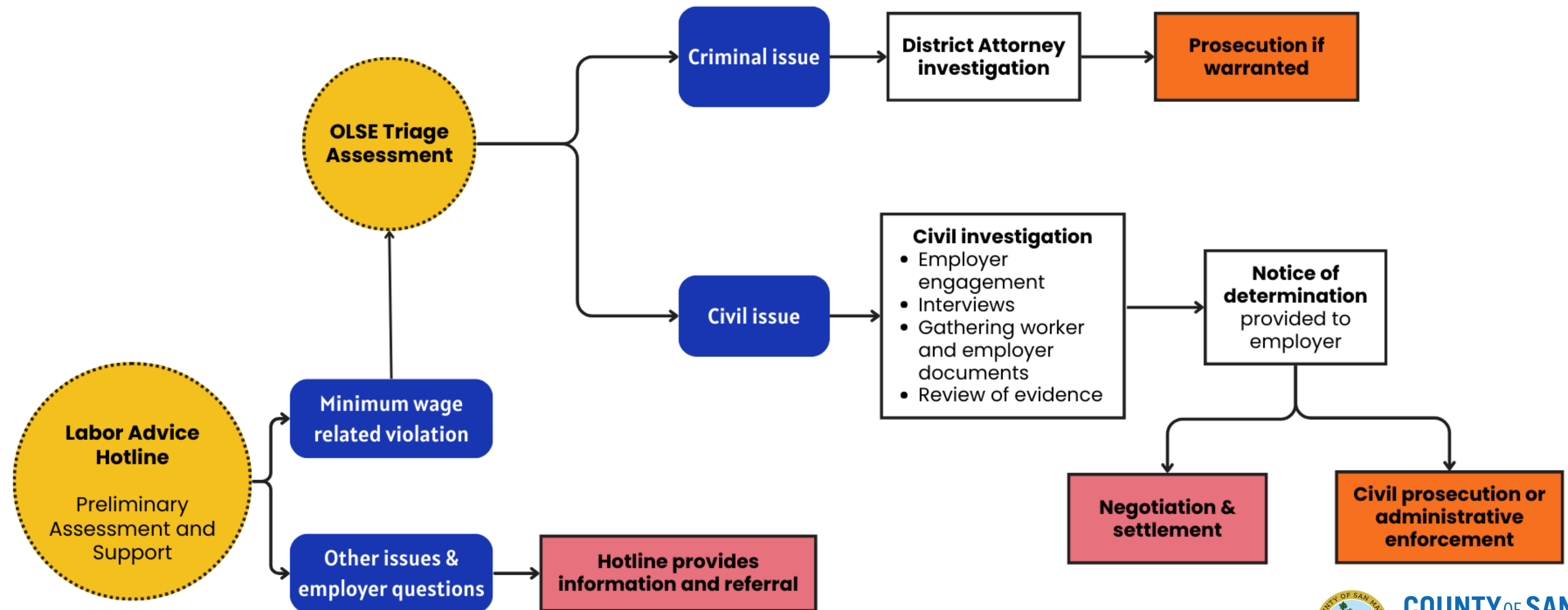
- Minimum wage investigations
- Compliance negotiations
- Civil prosecution

District Attorney's Office

- Wage theft, labor trafficking, and other criminal investigations
- Criminal prosecution



Our approach: complaint process



Phased implementation



Resources for learning more

- **About OLSE:** visit smcgov.org/olse
- **San Mateo County Minimum Wage**
 - \$17.46 per hour
 - Applies to the **unincorporated** areas
 - Visit smcgov.org/minwage for notices & info
- **California Labor Code**
 - Key rights include overtime, meal and rest breaks, and sick leave
 - Applies to **all of** San Mateo County
 - Learn more at dir.ca.gov/dlse/dlse-faqs.htm



San Mateo County

POST WHERE EMPLOYEE MAY READ EASILY
-VIOLATORS SUBJECT TO PENALTIES-

OFFICIAL NOTICE

THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SAN MATEO
COUNTY MINIMUM WAGE RATE IS:

\$17.46 PER HOUR

Effective January 1, 2025

Beginning **January 1, 2025**, employers who maintain a facility in the **unincorporated areas** of San Mateo County must pay to each employee who performs at least two (2) hours of work per week in **unincorporated** San Mateo County, minimum wages not less than \$17.46 per hour.

The minimum wage requirement set forth in the County of San Mateo Minimum Wage Ordinance applies to adult AND minor employees who work two (2) or more hours per week in businesses located in **unincorporated areas**. The minimum wage will be adjusted annually beginning on January 1 of each year. Tips are not included in the hourly wage. Employers shall maintain for at least three years for each employee, a record of the employee's name, hours worked and pay rate.



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Thank you!

Questions or
comments?

Keep in touch:

smcgov.org/olse

olse@smcgov.org

628-204-3982 (OLSE office)

866-870-7725 (Labor Advice Hotline)



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