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TOPICS

An employee who fails to return company equipment upon the employer's request is committing a criminal offence

Civil law contracts to count toward length of service from 1 May 2026

As of 1 January 2026, the national minimum wage will increase to PLN 4,806 per month, while the minimum hourly rate will rise to PLN 31.40

From 1 January 2026, fire separation walls must be clearly marked to allow them to be unambiguously identified from outside the building

AN EMPLOYEE WHO FAILS TO RETURN COMPANY EQUIPMENT UPON THE EMPLOYER'S REQUEST IS COMMITTING A CRIMINAL OFFENCE

The employer is the legal owner of all company equipment and is entitled to demand its return at any time. Unless a separate civil agreement (such as a loan-for-use contract) has been concluded between the parties, the employee has no legal right to retain the property.

The employer is not required to provide detailed justification for requesting the return of the equipment. Such requests most commonly occur during extended sick leave or upon the termination of employment.

A failure to return company equipment may constitute the criminal offence of embezzlement, defined as the unlawful appropriation of property that had previously been voluntarily entrusted to the offender by the owner. This offence is punishable by imprisonment for a period ranging from three months to five years. The employer is entitled to report the matter to the public prosecutor and to participate in the criminal proceedings as the injured party.



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CIVIL LAW CONTRACTS TO COUNT TOWARD LENGTH OF SERVICE FROM 1 MAY 2026

Periods of work under B2B contracts, as well as contracts of mandate or other service contracts concluded with the current employer, will be included in the length of service. This will also apply to contracts concluded before the new regulations come into force.

Employees will be required to document such periods with certificates from the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) within 24 months from the date the act enters into force.

AS OF 1 JANUARY 2026, THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE WILL INCREASE TO PLN 4,806 PER MONTH, WHILE THE MINIMUM HOURLY RATE WILL RISE TO PLN 31.40

In 2025, the minimum monthly wage amounts to PLN 4,666, and the minimum hourly rate is PLN 30.50 — both of which will be subject to an upward adjustment.



Anna Nowak
Attorney-at-law

The increase in the minimum wage will require employers to raise the salaries of employees earning less than PLN 4,806 gross per month. In addition, the adjustment will lead to a corresponding rise in the value of other employment-related benefits, such as:

- the night work allowance,
- the minimum compensation for unequal treatment,
- the minimum pay during periods of work readiness or downtime,
- retirement and disability severance payments, and
- the maximum statutory severance pay.



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FROM 1 JANUARY 2026, FIRE SEPARATION WALLS MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED TO ALLOW THEM TO BE UNAMBIGUOUSLY IDENTIFIED FROM OUTSIDE THE BUILDING

Owners, managers or users of warehousing, commercial and industrial facilities are required to mark separation walls where the wall divides fire zones of at least 2,000 m² each, and where at least one of the following conditions applies:

1. The external walls or roof of at least one fire zone are not made of non-combustible materials, or
2. The fire load density in at least one fire zone exceeds 1,000 MJ/m².

The marking must be carried out in accordance with the method specified in Annex 1 to the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 7 June 2010 on fire protection for buildings, other construction structures and areas, or in another manner agreed with the local District (Municipal) Commander of the State Fire Service.

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