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\$15/hour minimum wage: Making life more affordable

The Alberta government is raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour on Oct. 1 to help hard-working families make ends meet and build an economy that works for everyone.



Minister Christina Gray with Lynsae Moon, co-owner of the Nook Café.

The increase of \$1.40 per hour will make life better for hundreds of thousands of workers and is the final step in the government's commitment, made in 2015, to a fairer wage for all Albertans.

“Every hard-working Albertan deserves to be paid fairly. The \$15 minimum wage will make life more affordable for women, single parents, families and everyone who has been working a full-time job or more but is still struggling to put food on the table and pay their rent. I'm proud that we are delivering on our commitment to everyday Albertan families.”

- Christina Gray, Minister of Labour

The increased minimum wage is good for the overall economy as well. Every extra dollar that goes into the pockets of everyday Albertans gets invested back into their community and the local economy.

“I know first-hand the difficulty of raising and providing for a family on a low income. When I was 27, I found myself a single mother of two working a minimum-wage job trying to make ends meet.”

- Lynsae Moon, operator and co-owner, Nook Café

Based on a 40-hour week, someone making the increased minimum wage will earn \$2,912 more per year, which will help ensure that those in the service industry who take care of us can afford to take care of themselves and their families as well.

“The minimum wage increase is a great step towards empowering low-income Albertans and providing them with the opportunity to spend more on essential needs. The implementation of a livable wage in Alberta can relieve the pressure of low-income families to excel and achieve their goals, which will benefit their community and the province overall.”

- Tarek Fathelbab, manager of Community Engagement, Bredin Centre for Learning

Alberta low-income earner facts

- More than a quarter million Albertans earn less than \$15 per hour. They represent over 11 per cent of all workers.
- Only 24 per cent are aged 15-19. Over 40 per cent are aged 20-34 and over 12 per cent are aged 55+.
- Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) are women.
- Over half (53 per cent) work full time and 76 per cent have permanent jobs.
- About 37 per cent have children.

Economic indicators and minimum wage

- Alberta's overall employment increased almost two per cent from October 2015 to August 2018. Alberta's employment in the three lowest paying occupations (sales support, service support and salespersons) increased by about six per cent during that time.
- Employment in retail trade, the largest minimum wage sector, increased by 4.8 per cent from August 2017 to August 2018.
- According to Statistics Canada, restaurant sales in Alberta reached a record high in August, adding \$18 million year over year, and are expected to continue rising throughout 2018.

Employers and employees with questions about minimum wages can reach the Employment Standards Contact Centre at 780-427-3731, or toll-free at 1-877-427-3731, or visit www.work.alberta.ca/es.

Listen to the news conference



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Minimum wage increase on Oct. 1 – Sept. 28, 2018



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