

The minimum wage in Seattle depends on the following.

If the company you work for has 501 or more workers and does not pay towards your medical benefits then the minimum wage is \$15.45. If they do pay towards your medical benefits then it is \$15.00.

If they have 500 or fewer workers and they don't pay \$2.50/hour towards medical benefits or you do not get \$2.50/hour in tips, then the minimum wage is \$14.00. If one of those things is true then the minimum wage is \$11.50.

We know this seems confusing and it is! If you have questions about this you can contact the Office of Labor Standards at 206-256-5297 or you can get in touch with the IWW and we will help you or point you in the right direction.



Get in touch!

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360-362-0112

[OlympiaIWW.org](http://OlympiaIWW.org)

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Useful websites:

<https://georgetown.southseattle.edu/lerc/>

<https://www.lni.wa.gov/>

<https://www.IWW.org>

<https://www.labornotes.org>

## **UNDERSTANDING WAGE AND HOUR LAWS FOR WORKERS.**

*“If you’ve ever had a boss that paid you minimum wage then you’ve had a boss who has told you ‘I would pay you less if it weren’t for the fact that they would put me in jail.’”*



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The minimum wage is the least amount an employer can pay you per hour. It is set by federal, state and city law. As of January 1, 2018, the minimum wage in Washington State is \$11.50 per hour.

Workers who are 14 or 15 years old may be paid 85% of the adult minimum wage, or \$9.78.

In 2019 it will go up to \$12.00.

In 2020 it will be \$13.50.

Starting Jan. 1, 2021, minimum wage increases will be calculated by Labor & Industries using a formula tied to the rate of inflation.

Seatac's minimum wage is currently \$15.64. It is also increased each year for inflation.

Tacoma's minimum wage is currently \$12.00. It is also increased each year for inflation.

Washington's minimum wage law covers most workers in both agricultural and non-agricultural jobs. *The minimum wage law covers documented and undocumented workers.* You must be paid the minimum wage for all "hours worked" (explained below).

If your employer says, "I don't have to pay you the minimum wage," you can call the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries' (L&I) employment standards office at (360) 902-5316 or toll-free at 1 (866) 219-7321 to report your employer or file a complaint. Interpretation services are available.

However, having a union is always a better protection against the boss violating your rights!

### **What Is Included In "Hours Worked"?**

"Hours worked" includes all of the hours you actually worked and time spent waiting to work if your employer has asked you to wait, such as time spent waiting for boxes, time spent waiting for pick-up and weigh-in, or time spent waiting for a vehicle or equipment to arrive. It also includes time spent opening and closing a business, preparation time, time spent attending required meetings and training time. Generally, the time it takes to travel from your home to your workplace does not count as paid work. However, once you have begun the workday, you must be paid for time that you spend traveling from one place to another. Any time you spend performing all the duties mentioned above must be recorded and paid for.

### **Breaks**

For every four hours you work, you must be given a paid 10-minute rest break. If you work more than five hours in a day, you must be given at least a 30-minute meal break that has to come between two and five hours after the beginning of your shift.

If you work 11 or more hours in a day, you can take at least one more 30-minute meal break.

If you are breast-feeding, you can take as many breaks as you need to pump or breast-feed your newborn for up to one year after the birth of your child. These breaks

do not have to be paid. The employer has to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is private for you to take these breaks.

### **Overtime**

You have the right to overtime pay for all hours worked over 40 in a week. In most industries, you must be paid 1.5 times your regular rate of pay for all hours that you work over 40 in a seven-day workweek. The workweek begins on the same day every week – your employer decides what day this is.

### **You Have The Right To Try And Improve Your Working Conditions (Concerted Activity)**

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) protects the rights of most private sector employees to take action with coworkers to try and improve working conditions, pay or other issues on the job.

This is called "concerted activity." You do not need to have a union to have the right to engage in concerted activity. You may also be protected if you act alone on behalf of other workers if you discussed it with your coworkers beforehand.

The NLRA is a federal law that covers most private-sector workers as well as Postal Service employees. In Washington, most state or local government employees have similar rights under the Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act and the Public Service Reform Act.