

### **All Sonoma County Residents Who Work Hard and Play by the Rules Deserve a Fair Wage!**

The California state minimum wage in 2019 is \$12 an hour for large employers.\* This is not a fair wage because low-wage workers cannot make ends meet in high cost Sonoma County, particularly given skyrocketing rents and housing costs.\*

In California cities can set their own minimum wage higher than the state. North Bay Jobs with Justice proposes a \$15 minimum wage by 2020 for the cities of Sonoma, Sebastopol, Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Cotati and Novato that will increase the incomes of more than 52,000 affected low-wage workers by \$2900 annually.<sup>1</sup>

### **Why Raise the Minimum Wage Now?**

➤ From 1979-2016 inflation-adjusted wages for the upper 10 percent of the county workforce increased by 26 percent, but remained flat for the bottom 60 percent, while wages for the lowest 20 percent dropped by 11 percent.<sup>2</sup>

➤ A true living or self-sufficiency wage for Sonoma County in 2017 was \$23 an hour for two parents each working full-time to support two children—yet three-quarters of the new jobs created in the county between 2014 and 2024 will pay less than a livable wage.<sup>3</sup>

➤ Between 2000 and 2016 median rents in Sonoma County increased by 25 per cent, while median annual renter incomes increased by only 9 percent.<sup>4</sup>

➤ The median age of workers receiving a pay increase is 33, and on average, affected workers contribute more than half of their family's income. Fifty percent of all women workers, 27 percent of white workers, 51 percent of Latino workers, and 46 percent of immigrant workers will receive pay increases.<sup>5</sup>

### **Raising the Minimum Wage: How Will the Community Benefit?**

- Raising the minimum wage is an economic stimulus because low-wage workers will spend increased earnings locally on basic necessities.
- Boosting the minimum wage will cut poverty rates and make affected workers less reliant on public subsidies like Food Stamps and Medicaid.
- Increasing the minimum wage will make housing more affordable by offsetting rising rents.<sup>6</sup>



*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr stated in 1966: "a living wage should be the right of all Americans."*

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**For more information please see**

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

\*In 2019 the California minimum wage is \$11.00 an hour for small employers with 25 or fewer employees and \$12 an hour for large employers with 26 or more employees; The California minimum wage for will be incrementally phased-in to \$15 an hour for all employers by 2023 and then increased annually in 2024 based upon the rising cost of living (COLA).

*California Department of Industrial Relations –  
Minimum Wage*

[https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/faq\\_minimumwage.htm](https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/faq_minimumwage.htm)

## References

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(5) Ken Jacobs and Ian Perry – *\$15 Minimum Wage in California: Who Would Be Affected by the Proposal to Raise California’s Minimum Wage?* UCB Labor Center March 2016

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