

Heidi Drygas  
Commissioner

P.O. Box 111149  
Juneau, AK 99811-1149  
[www.labor.alaska.gov](http://www.labor.alaska.gov)



## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 24, 2015

No. 15-06

For more information: Grey Mitchell, Director of Labor Standards and Safety  
907-465-2700, [Grey.Mitchell@alaska.gov](mailto:Grey.Mitchell@alaska.gov)

# Minimum Wage Increase Takes Effect Today

*16,000 Alaskans will receive pay raise*

JUNEAU: Today Alaska's minimum wage will increase from \$7.75 to \$8.75 per hour, a 13% increase. Approximately 16,000 Alaska jobs currently pay less than \$8.75 per hour, meaning thousands of workers will see their pay go up. The minimum wage is increasing as a result of voters approving the minimum wage ballot initiative in November 2014.

"Today thousands of Alaskans are getting a pay raise," said Heidi Drygas, Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development. "This raise is long overdue, is great news for Alaska's lowest wage earners, and will increase the purchasing power of Alaskans."

The Alaska Constitution dictates that ballot measures take effect 90 days after passage. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, nearly 70% of voters supported Ballot Measure 3 to raise the minimum wage. This ballot measure also will increase the minimum wage to \$9.75 per hour on Jan. 1, 2016 and adjust the minimum wage each year thereafter for inflation. The ballot measure also requires evaluation and potential changes whenever the federal minimum wage is adjusted, as Alaska's minimum wage must remain at least \$1 above the federal minimum wage starting with the Feb. 24 effective date.

With some limited exceptions, Alaska's minimum wage applies to all employees in the private sector, whether working in a for-profit or not-for-profit business. It also applies to all hours worked in a pay period regardless of how the employee is paid: whether by time, piece, commission or otherwise. Tips do not count toward the minimum wage. Under Alaska law, public school bus driver wages must be not less than twice minimum wage. Also, certain employees must be paid a salary rate not less than twice minimum wage based on a 40-hour work week in order to maintain exempt status.

Recently-released statistics show Alaskans earn the [highest median wages in the United States](#), and the minimum wage increase will help protect Alaska's status as a good place to work and raise a family.

###