



City of
OAKLAND
California

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oakland's Minimum Wage Goes Up January 1, 2016 Rate goes up 30¢, from \$12.25 to \$12.55 based on the local Consumer Price Index

Oakland, CA — Oakland's Measure FF, a voter-enacted ballot measure passed in November 2014, provides annual increases to Oakland's Minimum Wage based on the local Consumer Price Index (CPI). Effective January 1, 2016, the rate rises 30¢, from \$12.25 to \$12.55. Oakland uses the August-to-August CPI data. The law requires that employers inform employees of the increase by December 15, 2015. To assist employers, partners of the City of Oakland will host several workshops over the next few weeks. The City also provides official notification posters, which can be found on the City's website at: oaklandnet.com/minimumwage.

Many cities and states across the nation have enacted minimum wage laws so that workers may earn a wage that will allow them to provide for themselves and their families. Oakland voters spoke at the ballot box by resoundingly passing Measure FF with an 82% majority in November 2014. Regionally, several cities have also enacted minimum wage laws comparable to the City of Oakland. Rate increases slated to take effect on July 1, 2016, will increase both Emeryville's and San Francisco's minimum wage. San Francisco's minimum wage rate will increase by 75¢, to \$13.00 per hour, while large businesses in Emeryville will have a minimum wage estimated at \$14.82, depending on local CPI.

"I am so proud that in Oakland – a city where 90 percent of the local businesses have 20 or fewer employees – business owners have risen to the challenge of meeting our new minimum wage requirements," said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. "I know it hasn't been easy for many businesses, but with the support of Oaklanders who have shopped, eaten and purchased services locally, Oakland is proving that our city and its economy are stronger when our workers earn a living wage."

Minimum Wage Increase

Based on the local CPI, Measure FF raises the minimum wage in Oakland to **\$12.55 on January 1, 2016**. Employees who perform at least two hours of work in a particular workweek within Oakland – including part-time, temporary and seasonal employees – must be paid at least the minimum wage. The minimum wage increase corresponds to the August 2014 to August 2015 increase of approximately 2.5% in the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers for the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The other benefits mandated by Measure FF – including paid sick leave and payment of service charges to hospitality workers – remain the same as when the employment law took effect on March 2, 2015.

Employers are prohibited from discharging, reducing compensation or otherwise discriminating against any person who makes a complaint under the law.

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What Employers Need to Do

To comply with Measure FF, Oakland employers – and employers whose employees work at least two hours in a particular work week in Oakland – must begin paying their employees \$12.55 per hour on January 1, 2016. In addition, they must **distribute and prominently display notices** of the new Minimum Wage rate of \$12.55 to employees by **December 15, 2015**. Notices must be in languages spoken by more than 10% of employees. Each new employee at time of hire should also receive the notice of the new Minimum Wage.

To assist employers, the City of Oakland has provided notification posters in English, Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese for download at:
oaklandnet.com/minimumwage.

Outreach Efforts to Raise Awareness about Measure FF

To educate both employers and employees about the minimum wage increase, the City of Oakland is conducting business and community outreach. The City will undertake the following: Mail an informational postcard in four languages to all registered businesses in November; Mail an informational insert in four languages in the Business License Tax Renewal mailing in December 2015; Distribute 20,000 postcards throughout the community; Regularly post information on social media; Advertise in select newspapers including non-English outlets; Broadcast a series of informational slides on the City's television station KTOP TV 10; Conduct business-by-business visits in commercial districts; and Support business briefings sponsored by its partners in October, November and December 2015, in addition to employee workshops in November and December 2015.

Upcoming Business Briefings by the City of Oakland's Partners:

Thursday, October 29, 1 to 4 p.m.

Business Workshop **in Spanish** for Spanish Speaking Employers
Hearing Room 3, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Presented by the Alameda County Small Business Development Center and Chase Bank

Thursday, November 12, 10 a.m. to Noon

Mastering Oakland's New Employment Laws Workshop
Hearing Room 1, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Presented by the Alameda County Small Business Development Center and Wendel, Rosen, Black & Dean LLP

Wednesday, December 2, 1 to 3 p.m.

Mastering Oakland's New Employment Laws Workshop
Hearing Room 1, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Presented by the Alameda County Small Business Development Center and Wendel, Rosen, Black & Dean LLP

Wednesday, December 16, 1 to 3 p.m.

Mastering Oakland's New Employment Laws Workshop **in Cantonese** for Cantonese Speaking Employers
Hearing Room 1, Oakland City Hall, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Presented by the Alameda County Small Business Development Center and Wendel, Rosen, Black & Dean LLP

Free monthly business law clinics and consultations for entrepreneurs or business owners who have legal questions are provided by Legal Services for Entrepreneurs, a program of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. For more information on the legal clinic and general business technical assistance, please contact the City of Oakland's Business Assistance Center (BAC) at oaklandbusinesscenter.com, (510) 238-7952 or oaklandbac@oaklandnet.com.

Resources for Employees

If you believe that your employer is not paying you the voter-mandated minimum wage and/or providing paid sick leave, you can hire an attorney to file an action against your employer or contact the City of Oakland's Contracts & Compliance office at (510) 238-6258, or email: minwageinfo@oaklandnet.com.

To file a complaint with the City, please visit oaklandnet.com/minimumwage and complete the Employee Questionnaire & Declaration Complaint Form. After you submit your completed form, a Minimum Wage Compliance Officer will follow up with you.

Employers are prohibited from discharging, reducing compensation or otherwise discriminating or retaliating against any person who makes a complaint under the ordinance.

Minimum Wage Complaints Received

From March 2, 2015, when Measure FF took effect, to October 16, 2015, the City of Oakland's Contracts and Compliance division has received 22 complaints. Thus far, the City has resolved three complaints, including two for Minimum Wage violations and one for a Paid Sick Leave violation. Of the remaining 19 open cases, seven cases are for Minimum Wage violations, six cases allege retaliation by employers, five are for Paid Sick Leave violations and one is for a Service Charge violation.

More Resources Available Online

The City of Oakland created a web page dedicated to providing up-to-date information, tools and resources for employers and employees needing information about this new employment law. Go to oaklandnet.com/minimumwage to find:

- A calendar of upcoming informational workshops for employers put on by City partners;
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);
- Legally mandated notification posters for the workplace in English, Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese;
- Tools and resources for employers, including partner organizations that offer technical assistance and legal resources; and
- Measure FF ballot measure language.

If employers or employees have questions or need additional assistance after visiting oaklandnet.com/minimumwage, they should call (510) 238-6258, or email: minwageinfo@oaklandnet.com. Kindly provide your name and telephone number as well as business name and address in your message. City staff will respond to questions and provide additional information.

Business Impacts

Due to the lag time in reporting of sales tax revenue, it's not clear what impact Measure FF has had on sales tax, an important indicator of business activity. However, data from the State of California's Employment Development Department ("EDD") indicates that Oakland's unemployment rate has fallen from 6.1% in February 2015 to 5.3% in September 2015. In the same time period, employment has risen from 196,400 to 199,900.

Additional insight can be provided in the results of a business survey conducted by a Mills College graduate student in July 2015 aimed to find out how Measure FF affected employment, business location and prices. More than a 110 Oakland businesses responded from a wide range of industries and geographic areas. Nearly half (45%) of the respondents said they had made changes as a result of the Minimum Wage hike. Only 4% reported a decrease in the number of full-time employees, while 17% reported an increase in the number of full-time employees. More than 20% of respondents used City services to respond to the requirements of Measure FF. The survey results were consistent across different geographic areas within Oakland. Only two respondents suggested changes in the Minimum Wage law as an important way that the City of Oakland can support businesses.

Support Oakland Businesses, Support Oakland Workers

As local businesses are adjusting to this change, it's important to support our dynamic local business community and in turn support Oakland workers. Shop in Oakland stores, dine at Oakland restaurants, visit Oakland cafes, stay in Oakland hotels and hire Oakland companies.

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