

## B.C.'s minimum wage going up May 1



Premier Christy Clark and Labour Minister Stephanie Cadieux announce minimum wage increases at the B.C. legislature Wednesday.

*Tom Fletcher/Black Press*

By [Tom Fletcher - BC Local News](#)

Published: **March 16, 2011 2:00 PM**

Updated: **March 16, 2011 4:06 PM**

B.C.'s minimum wage is going up from \$8 an hour to \$8.75 on May 1, with two more increases by next year.

Premier Christy Clark made the announcement Wednesday after her first cabinet meeting. She called it a "long overdue first step" in a province where the minimum wage hasn't changed in a decade and is the lowest in Canada. When fully implemented, the pay of a minimum wage worker will increase by about \$4,000 a year.

The general hourly minimum wage rate rises to \$8.75 on May 1, to \$9.50 on Nov. 1 and to \$10.25 on May 1, 2012. The \$6 an hour training wage is also being eliminated this May 1.

A lower minimum will be set for restaurant and bar employees who serve alcohol: \$8.50 an hour on May 1, \$8.75 on Nov. 1 and \$9 on May 1, 2012. Clark said that measure is similar to the minimum wage system in Ontario, and it reflects the tips earned by alcohol servers.

"People who serve alcohol for a living will in many cases be earning more from their tips than they do from their wages," Clark said.

NDP critic Shane Simpson said the initial increase will still leave B.C. with the lowest minimum wage in the country. The NDP and the B.C. Federation of Labour have been campaigning for an immediate increase to \$10 an hour.

"We know that even at \$10.25, it will still be below the low-income cutoff for poverty rates in this province, so it's still going to be a challenge," Simpson said.

Clark denied that raising the minimum wage will cost jobs in the B.C. economy.

"Less than three per cent of the population works at minimum wage," Clark said. "It's about 41,000 people, and a good portion of that will be working in an alcohol server jobs. So I don't think it will cost jobs."

Business representatives disagreed.

"The research is clear that minimum wage hikes put entry-level jobs in jeopardy," said Mark von Schellwitz, Chair of the Coalition of BC Businesses. "Employers on tight margins will have to roll back hours or hold off new hires due to increased payroll costs as well as expectations for cascading wage hikes for non-minimum wage employees."

Labour Minister Stephanie Cadieux said the decision to phase in the increase was made after detailed consultation with business and labour representatives, begun last fall. The ministry will review the situation every two years to see if further changes need to be made, Cadieux said.

```
a.adLink_a:hover {background-color: ; text-decoration: underline; } a.adTitle_a:hover {background-color: ; text-decoration: underline; } a.adLink_a {text-decoration: none; color: gray; } .single_center {text-align: center} a.adTitle_a {text-decoration: none } .adText {text-decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size: 12px; font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .adLink {overflow: hidden; color:gray;text-decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size: 17px; font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .abg {color: gray;text-decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size: 11px; font-weight: bold; font-style: normal;} .adTitle {color:2e95d9;text-decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size:14px; font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .ad_box1 {border-style:solid;border-width:1px; border-color:#FFF; background-color: #ebf4fb;width:500px;margin-left:0px; opacity: 1; background-image: url(); background: nottransparent; margin: 0 auto; clear: both; }
```

<

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.bclocalnews.com/greater\\_vancouver/newwestminsternewsleader/news/118125084.html](http://www.bclocalnews.com/greater_vancouver/newwestminsternewsleader/news/118125084.html)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© Copyright Black Press. All rights reserved.