

Greater Victoria

On June 1, BC's minimum wage increases to **\$18.25 per hour**. Despite this welcome pay raise for the province's lowest-paid workers, the minimum wage remains over \$9 per hour lower than the living wage in **Greater Victoria (\$27.40 per hour)**.

The **living wage** is the hourly rate that a full-time worker must earn to cover essential expenses, avoid chronic financial stress and participate in the social, civic and cultural life of their community. It is based on the actual costs of living in a particular community at a specific point in time and takes into account all government benefits available to workers and their families and all taxes and mandatory deductions they have to pay.

The living wage supports a basic, decent standard of living without many of the comforts or extras that many take for granted. It does not cover credit card, loan or other debt payments, savings for retirement, a downpayment on a home or the extra costs of caring for disabled, seriously ill or elderly family members. Across BC, the living wage ranges between \$21.55 in Grand Forks and \$29.60 in Whistler.

People who don't earn a living wage face impossible trade-offs—buy groceries or heat the house, keep up with bills or pay the rent on time. The result can be spiraling debt, constant financial anxiety and long-term health problems. It often means working long hours, sometimes at multiple jobs, just to pay for necessities.

Nearly 70,000 people in **Greater Victoria**—68,700 or **33% of all employees in the region**—earn less than the living wage of \$27.40 per hour.



The majority of people earning less than \$27.40 per hour in Greater Victoria are women.

- 37,800 people earning less than \$27.40 per hour are women (**55%**).
- Women are slightly more likely to be paid less than \$27.40 per hour than men (**35% of all women** earn less than the living wage compared to only **31% of men**).



And while it's often assumed that young workers earn low wages, **the majority of people earning less than \$27.40 per hour in Greater Victoria are 25 or older.**

- 24,400 people earning less than \$27.40 per hour are **between 15 and 24 years old (36%)**.
- 44,300 people earning less than \$27.40 per hour are **25 or older (64%)**.
 - 27,400 people earning less than \$27.40 per hour are between **25 and 44 years old (40%)**.
 - 13,300 people earning less than \$27.40 per hour are between **45 and 64 years old (19%)**.
 - 3,700 workers earning less than \$27.40 per hour are **65 or older (5%)**.



One third of Greater Victoria workers earning less than \$27.40 per hour are racialized (33% or 22,800 people) although only 25% of employees are racialized.

- Racialized workers are more likely to be paid less than \$27.40 per hour than their counterparts (**43% of all racialized workers earn less than the living wage** compared to only 29% of non-racialized workers)



Nearly half of all racialized women working in Greater Victoria earn less than the living wage.

- **43% of racialized women** and **43% of racialized men** working in Greater Victoria earn less than the living wage, 11,800 women and 10,900 men. In contrast, only 32% of non-racialized women earn less than the living wage, as do 27% of non-racialized men.