

Ontario to Have the Highest Minimum Wage in the Country

Ontario is set to join Nunavut in having the highest minimum wage in Canada come June 1, 2014. Last week the Ontario Liberal Government announced that the general minimum wage would increase to \$11 per hour as of June 1, 2014. It is Ontario's first increase to minimum wage in four years with the Government commenting that it is a fair adjustment and one that better reflects the rise in the Consumer Price Index. Currently Ontario's minimum wage sits in the middle with British Columbia at \$10.25 per hour. Alberta currently has the lowest general minimum wage at \$9.95 per hour.

Anti-poverty activists had pushed for a minimum wage of \$14 per hour, which would have been \$3 more per hour than any other Province! Thankfully the Provincial government realized that such an increase would have had a significant negative impact on businesses and end up costing employees their jobs. Even still, the increase represents a 7% increase in business costs according to the Progressive Conservatives, which may lead to workforce reductions.

While no further increases are planned, the Liberal Government did promise legislation that would tie all future increases in the minimum wage rate to the rate of inflation, with new wage rates announced April 1 each year, with an effective date of October 1. If such legislation comes to pass, Ontario would join Alberta, Nova Scotia, and the Yukon as Provinces and Territories who tie minimum wage to inflation.

General minimum wage rates along with a general overview of the Employment Standards for each jurisdiction can be found under the Resource Centre tab at www.e2rsolutions.com. We will certainly continue to monitor this situation and provide you with any timely updates. In the interim, below is a reminder of the general minimum wage rates across Canada.

Province	General Minimum Wage Rate	Effective Date
British Columbia	\$10.25	May 1, 2012
Alberta	\$9.95	Sept. 1, 2013
Saskatchewan	\$10.00	Dec. 1, 2012
Manitoba	\$10.45	Oct. 1, 2013

Ontario	\$10.25*	Mar. 31, 2010*
Quebec	\$10.15	May 1, 2013
New Brunswick	\$10.00	Apr. 12, 2012
Nova Scotia	\$10.30	Apr. 1, 2013
Prince Edward Island	\$10.00	Apr. 1, 2012
Newfoundland	\$10.00	July 1, 2010
Northwest Territories	\$10.00	Apr. 1, 2011
Yukon	\$10.54	Apr. 1, 2013
Nunavut	\$11.00	Jan. 1, 2011
* Ontario is set to raise its minimum wage to \$11.00 effective June 1, 2014		

If you have any questions about minimum wage, please do not hesitate to contact e2r Solutions*.

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