

Trapped in the Wage Gap: Metro Vancouver

On June 1, BC's minimum wage is going up to \$17.40 per hour. Despite this welcome pay raise for the lowest-paid workers in the province, the minimum wage remains \$8 per hour lower than the living wage in Metro Vancouver (\$25.68 per hour).



495,600 Metro Vancouver workers earn less than \$25.68 per hour.

The living wage is the hourly rate that full-time workers need to earn to support a family, including covering the necessities, escaping severe financial stress and participating in the social, civic and cultural lives of their communities. It is based on the actual costs of living in a particular community and affords a decent if still very modest standard of living without the extras many of us take for granted. The living wage does not cover credit card, loan or other debt payments, savings for retirement, or for a downpayment on a home or the extra costs of caring for a disabled, seriously ill or elderly family member.



283,100 workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are women (57%).



331,900 (67%) are over 25 — only 163,600 (33%) are under 25.

- ➔ 184,900 workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are between 25 and 44 years old (37%).
- ➔ 125,000 workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are between 45 and 64 years old (25%).
- ➔ 22,000 workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are 65 or older (4%).

Nearly half a million workers in Metro Vancouver earn less than the living wage of \$25.68 per hour. Far too many of these workers face impossible choices—buy groceries or heat the house, keep up with bills or pay the rent on time. The result can be spiraling debt, constant anxiety and long-term health problems. In many cases it means working long hours, often at multiple jobs, just to pay for basic necessities.



Nearly two thirds of workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are racialized — although only 55% of paid employees are racialized.

- ➔ 317,200 workers earning less than \$25.68 per hour are racialized (64%).
- ➔ Racialized workers are more likely to be paid less than \$25.68 per hour than their counterparts (44% of all racialized workers earn less than the living wage compared to only 30% of non-racialized workers)

Data obtained through a custom tabulation from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey allows us to take a closer look at who earns less than the living wage in Metro Vancouver.



Half of all racialized women working in Metro Vancouver earn less than the living wage of \$25.68 per hour.

- ➔ 49% of racialized women working in Metro Vancouver earn less than the living wage, 181,500 people. In contrast, 38% of racialized men earn less than the living wage, as do 35% of white women and 25% of white men.



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This fact sheet is part of *Trapped in the wage gap: Who earns less than the living wage in BC*. Download the full report at policyalternatives.ca/gap