



WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS AN EMPLOYEE IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON?

MINIMUM WAGE



Historically, there were no rules about what employers had to pay their workers. If an employer could find someone to work 14 hours a day for \$1.00 a day, there was no law against that.

We are fortunate to live in the State of Washington, where the minimum wage is the highest in the United States, and one of only 10 states that adjust the minimum wage based on inflation and the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers. For the year 2102, the minimum wage rate is \$9.04 per hour.

Beginning on January 1, 2013, the rate will be increased by 15 cents per hour, to \$9.19. This rate applies to both agricultural and non-agricultural workers, however, 14- and 15-year-old workers may be paid 85 percent of the adult minimum wage (\$7.68 in 2012, \$7.81 in 2013).

Most workers must be paid the minimum wage for all "hours worked" as required by state law. "Hours worked" includes opening and closing the business, and attending required meetings and training. Any time spent by an employee in the performance of these duties must be recorded and paid.

Businesses may not use tips as credit toward minimum wages owed to a worker.

More information on Washington's minimum wage is available at Wages.Lni.wa.gov.

In a recent case, the Supreme Court of Washington held that when employees work through their rest breaks, the unused rest break time must be added on to the employee's "hours worked" for the week, and paid at the overtime rate if adding that time to the time actually worked totals over 40 hours in a week.

Workers have fought for decades to have the legal right to a minimum wage. If you feel you are not being paid according to the law, call Nelson Boyd at (206) 971-7601 or toll-free at (877) 971-7601. We will fight for your rights!