
FEDERAL

Characteristics of Minimum Wage Workers in 2016

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), in 2016, 79.9 million workers age 16 and older in the United States were paid at hourly rates, representing 58.7 percent of all wage and salary workers. Among those paid by the hour, 701,000 workers earned exactly the prevailing federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. About 1.5 million had wages below the federal minimum. Together, these 2.2 million workers with wages at or below the federal minimum made up 2.7 percent of all hourly paid workers.

The percentage of hourly paid workers earning the prevailing federal minimum wage or less declined from 3.3 percent in 2015 to 2.7 percent in 2016.

This report highlights and statistical tables describing workers who earned at or below the federal minimum wage in 2016. The data are obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a national monthly survey of approximately 60,000 households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Information on earnings is collected from one-fourth of the CPS sample each month.

The following are highlights from the 2016 data:

- **Age.** Minimum wage workers tend to be young. Although workers under age 25 represented only about one-fifth of hourly paid workers, they made up about half of those paid the federal minimum wage or less. Among employed teenagers (ages 16 to 19) paid by the hour, about 10 percent earned the minimum wage or less, compared with about 2 percent of workers age 25 and older.
- **Marital status.** Of those paid an hourly wage, never-married workers, who tend to be young, were more likely (5 percent) than married workers (1 percent) to earn the federal minimum wage or less.
- **Full- and part-time status.** About 6 percent of part-time workers (persons who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week) were paid the federal minimum wage or less, compared with about 2 percent of full-time workers.

National Findings

- 9.7% of workers aged 16-19 years old are receiving minimum wage or less. Out of those 5% are below minimum wage.
- 6.2% of workers aged 16-24 years old are receiving minimum wage or less. Out of those 3.7% are below minimum wage.

STATE OF ILLINOIS

Illinois Findings

- Out of the 3.1 Million workers 76,000 or 2.4% are receiving minimum wage. 1.8% or 55,900 of workers are receiving less than the minimum wage.

Key Facts: Public Act 94-1072

- Employers may apply for licenses to pay sub-minimum rates to learners and certain workers with physical and mental limitations.
- Tipped employees may be paid 60% of the hourly minimum wage. Credit for tips may not exceed 40% of the applicable minimum wage.
- Overtime must be paid after 40 hours of work per week at time and one-half the regular rate for certain employees

Category of Employees	Wage
Adults (18 or older)	
Hourly	\$8.25
Optional Rates	
First 90 days with employer for non-tipped employees	\$7.75
Tipped employees after first 90 days of employment	\$4.95
First 90 days with employer for tipped employees	\$4.65
Youths (under 18)	
Hourly	\$7.75
Optional Rate	

Sources:

https://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/2017/areaemployment_chicago_20170504.htm
<https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2014/beyond-bls/determining-the-employment-effect-of-raising-the-minimum-wage.htm>
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