



Labor Laws and Wage Equity

What is wage equity, and how do minimum wage laws relate to wage equity?

Conversation Questions

1. How would you define a living wage?
2. How should a minimum wage be determined?

Key Definitions *(from Merriam-Webster Dictionary)*

- *Cost of living* – the cost of purchasing those goods and services which are included in an accepted standard level of consumption
- *Minimum wage* – a wage fixed by legal authority or by contract as the least that may be paid either to employed persons generally or to a particular category of employed persons
- *Living wage* – a wage sufficient to provide the necessities and comforts essential to an acceptable standard of living

Read

“What is the history of the minimum wage?” from the Center for Poverty Research at University of California, Davis

<https://bit.ly/2ApHF9D>

This resource summary of the history of minimum wage includes the passage of FLSA in the US and the differences in state minimum wage laws, as well as recent government reports and fact sheets.

“Federal Minimum Wage: In Brief” by David H. Bradley

<https://bit.ly/2H3vbGT>

The Congressional Research Service's Bradley wrote a report about the federal minimum wage reviewing and summarizing arguments for and against increasing the minimum wage.





**“Summary of the Major Laws of the Department of Labor”
from U.S. Department of Labor**

<https://bit.ly/1UgpVit>

This resource details the summary of the major laws of the department of labor. It includes how FLSA is administration by the Wage and Hour Division and the DOL’s principal statutes that is applicable to businesses, job seekers, and workers.

“Skokie abandons plan that would reduce minimum wage until 2024” by Jonah Meadows

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ebfhut>

An article from the *Patch* describes the tabling of a proposal that would reduce minimum wage in Skokie. This proposal would have countered the Cook County minimum wage ordinance pressures to increase hourly wages in the suburbs to rise 2.5 percent annually.

“Chicago aldermen may raise the minimum wage to \$15. But with the city’s cost of living, is that even enough?” by Lolly Bovean

<https://tinyurl.com/y66ahjr4>

Is \$15 enough to live in the city of Chicago? Reporter Bovean interviewed minimum wage workers and small businesses to see how the increase in pay affects their lives. Bovean found that small businesses are required to inflate costs of goods to increase wages, and workers are still working paycheck to paycheck.

Watch

30 Days from Morgan Spurlock

<https://bit.ly/2KYUUBR>

In this documentary series, Spurlock spends 30 days living on minimum wage in Ohio. He and his fiancé try to make ends meet and do not pay any bills with a credit card. They begin with \$300 in their savings account, and live on \$5.15 per hour for a month.

