

Together, we can...

Raise the Minimum Wage

Everyone in our communities who works a full-time job should bring home enough to feed their family and keep a roof overhead.

But for too many families, that isn't the case – not because they're not trying hard, but because their job doesn't pay enough to make ends meet. Even after the rapid inflation of the past 18 months and our progress in raising Virginia's minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$12 an hour, 1 in every 8 Virginia workers is still paid less than \$15 an hour. Virginia's current minimum wage of \$12 an hour is far below a living wage for even a single adult in Virginia, creating a low floor that limits the bargaining power of working Virginians.

The federal minimum wage hasn't increased in 14 years because some politicians listen to big corporations more than working people. Virginia's minimum wage has increased to \$12 an hour, with a pathway to \$15 in 2026. Yet when Virginia legislators set the \$12 level back in 2020, they did not anticipate the sustained period of higher inflation resulting from supply-chain bottlenecks and the war in Ukraine. Unless legislators act, the minimum wage will be stuck at \$12 an hour until 2025, then will only be adjusted at the rate that costs rise. Because the starting point would be so low, these wage increases would never be enough for families to actually afford the costs of the essentials.

What can we do?

The minimum wage is a crucial labor standard that bolsters the bargaining power of people who are paid low wages and particularly improves the wages and lives of working women of color. Raising the wage to \$15 an hour by January 1, 2026 will raise wages for about 611,000 working Virginians, most of whom work at least 35 hours a week. Nine out of every 10 workers who will benefit are over age 20, most are workers of color, and 6 out of every 10 are women.

Advance commonsense policies

- Raise the minimum wage to a more livable level.
- Include farmworkers in labor protections, undoing a legacy of exclusion that's left over from the 1930s.

Learn more & engage

- Talk to your neighbors and friends about what raising Virginia's minimum wage might mean for them.
- Follow organizations like New Virginia Majority and The Commonwealth Institute to learn more about the fight to raise Virginia's minimum wage.

Who would benefit from raising the minimum wage to \$15/hr by Jan 1, 2026?

- about 611,000 working people
- most work 35+ hrs/wk
- 9/10 are >20 yrs old
- most are working people of color
- 6/10 are women