NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For Release: Wednesday, July 06, 2016 16-1433-SAN

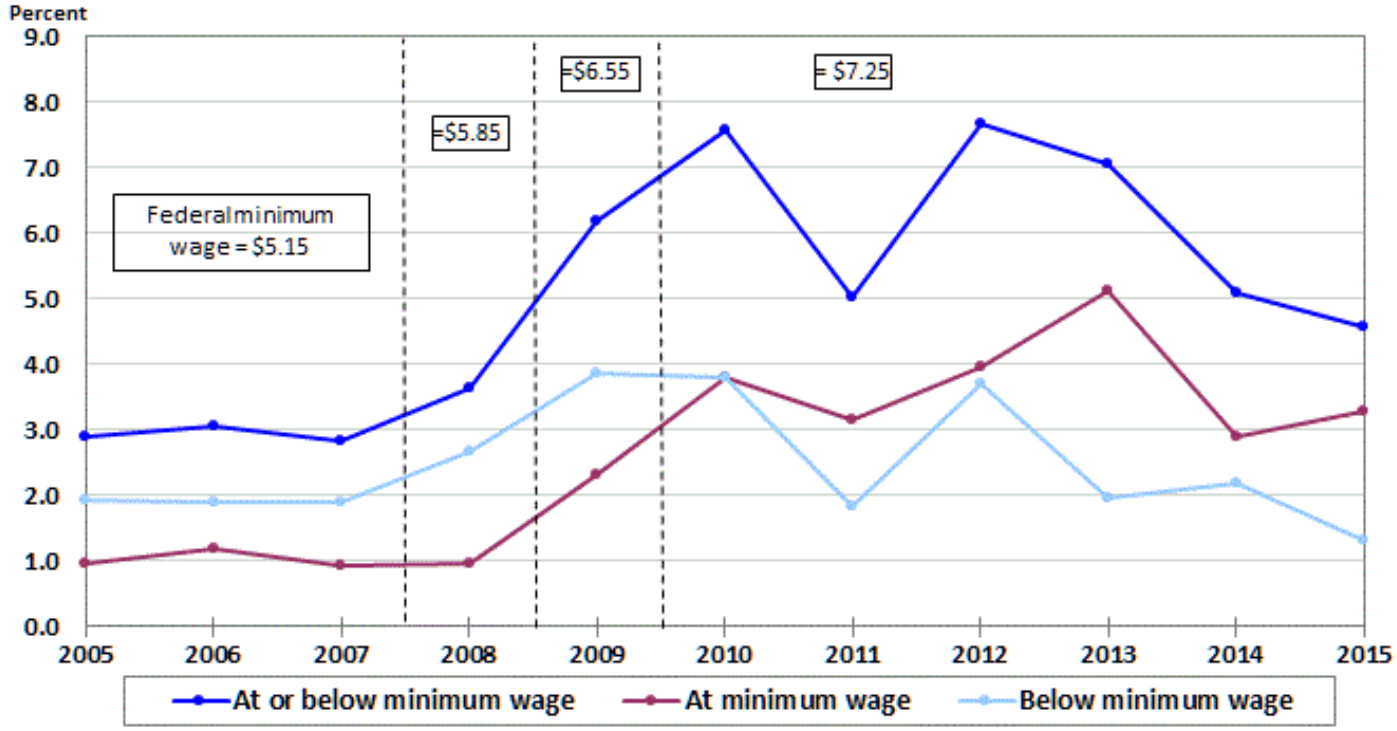
WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.
Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west
Media contact: (415) 625-2270

Minimum Wage Workers in Idaho – 2015

Of the 458,000 workers paid hourly rates in Idaho in 2015, 15,000 earned exactly the prevailing federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour, while 6,000 earned less, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the 21,000 workers earning the federal minimum wage or less made up 4.6 percent of all hourly paid workers in the state. Nationwide, those earning the federal minimum or less accounted for 3.3 percent of the hourly paid workforce. (See table 1. The Idaho minimum wage is equal to the prevailing federal minimum wage.)

In 2003, 11,000 hourly paid workers earned the prevailing federal minimum wage or less in Idaho, the lowest level since data were first available in 2000. The 11,000 workers in this category accounted for 3.0 percent of all hourly paid workers in the state. In 2007, the federal minimum wage began increasing after holding steady for nearly a decade. (See chart 1.) Two additional increases in the federal minimum wage followed, resulting in more Idaho workers falling into this category, peaking at 31,000 in 2012. That number has fallen in two of the three years since the peak.

Chart 1. Percentage of hourly paid wage and salary workers with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage in Idaho, annual averages, 2005-2015



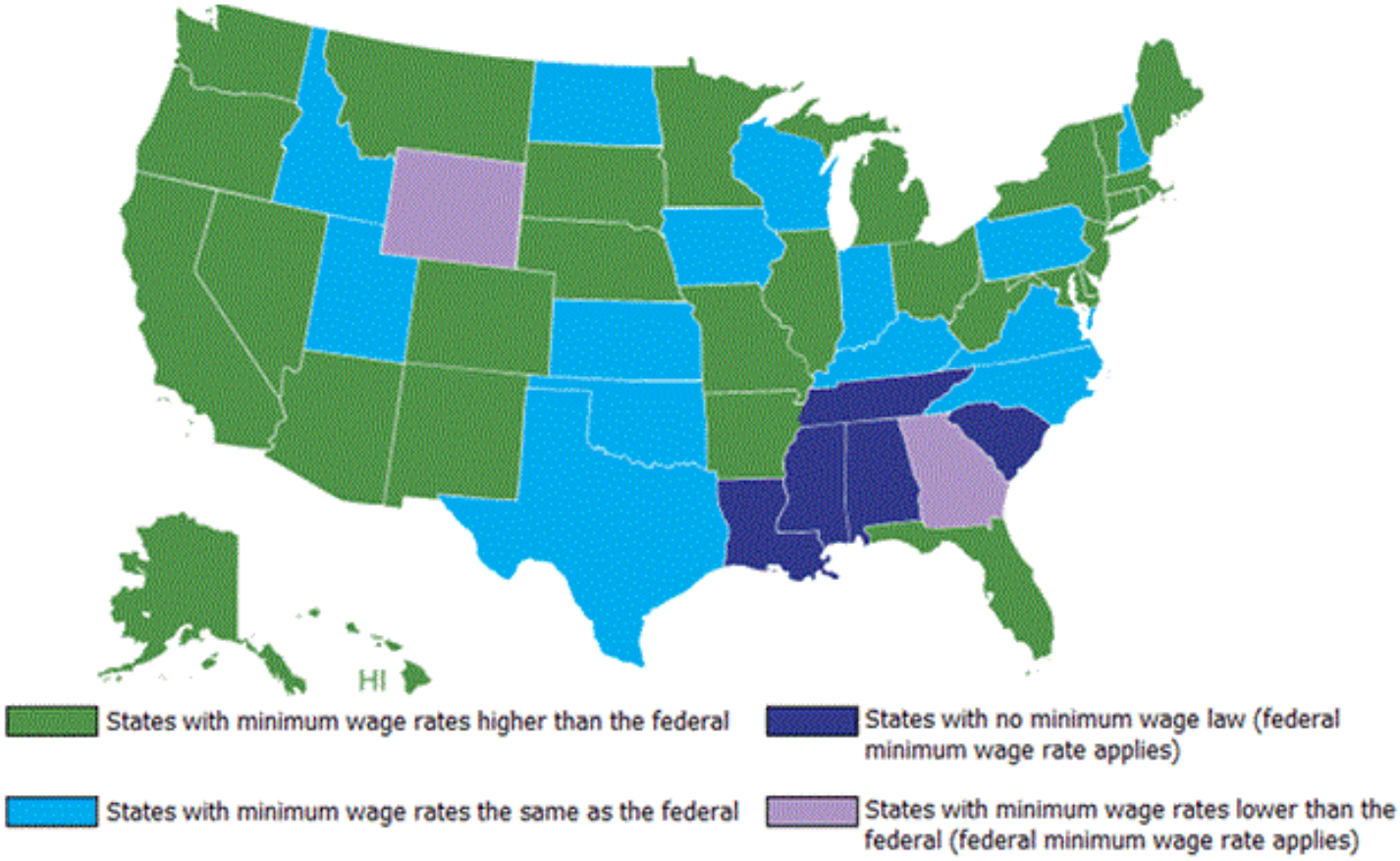
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

From 2014 to 2015, the portion of hourly paid workers in Idaho who earned at or below the federal minimum wage declined from 5.1 to 4.6 percent. The percentage of workers earning less than the federal minimum fell 0.9 percentage point in 2015 to 1.4 percent, while the share earning exactly the minimum wage rose 0.4 percentage point to 3.2 percent.

Of the 21,000 workers earning the federal minimum wage or less in Idaho in 2015, 13,000, or 62 percent, were women. (See table 2.) These women represented 5.6 percent of all women paid hourly rates in the state. There were 9,000 men earning the minimum wage or less in Idaho, accounting for 4.0 percent of all men paid hourly rates in the state.

In 2015, Idaho's proportion of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage ranked ninth among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The states with the highest percentages of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage were in the South: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Virginia (all were about 6 percent). The states with the lowest percentages of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage were in the West: Alaska, California, Oregon, and Washington (all were about 1 percent). It should be noted that a number of states have established minimum wage rates that exceed the federal level. As of January 1, 2016, 29 states and the District of Columbia had minimum wage rates that exceeded the federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

Chart 2. Minimum wage laws in the states, January 1, 2016



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau using a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 eligible households in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey also provides data on earnings, which are based on one-fourth of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers. All self-employed workers, both incorporated and unincorporated, are excluded from these earnings estimates.

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. The differences among data for the states reflect, in part, variations in the occupation, industry, and age composition of each state's labor force. In addition, sampling error for the state estimates is considerably larger than it is for the national data.

Minimum wage worker data, particularly levels, for each year are not strictly comparable with data for earlier years because of the introduction of revised population controls used in the CPS. For technical documentation and related information, including reliability of the CPS estimates, see www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm.

Some workers reported as earning at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage may not, in fact, be covered by federal or state minimum wage laws because of exclusions and exemptions in the statutes. The presence of workers with hourly earnings below the federal minimum wage does not necessarily indicate violations of the FLSA or state statutes in cases where such standards apply.

Estimates of the number of minimum wage workers in this release pertain only to workers who are paid hourly rates. Salaried workers and other workers who are not paid by the hour are excluded, even though some have earnings that, if converted to hourly rates, would be at or below the federal minimum wage. Consequently, the estimates presented in this release likely understate the actual number of workers with hourly earnings at or below the minimum wage.

The prevailing federal minimum wage was $2.90 in 1979, $3.10 in 1980, and $3.35 in 1981-89. The minimum wage rose to $3.80 in April 1990, $4.25 in April 1991, $4.75 in October 1996, and $5.15 in September 1997. On July 24, 2007, the federal minimum wage increased to $5.85 per hour; on July 24, 2008, to $6.55 per hour; and on July 24, 2009, to $7.25 per hour.

The principal definitions for the main concepts presented in this report are below.

Wage and salary workers. Workers age 16 and older who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payments in kind, or piece rates on their sole or principal job. This group includes employees in both the private and public sectors. All self-employed workers are excluded whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Workers paid at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage pertain only to workers who are paid hourly rates. Salaried workers and other nonhourly paid workers are excluded.

Hourly earnings. Hourly earnings data are for wage and salary workers who are paid by the hour and refer to a person's sole or principal job. Hourly earnings for hourly paid workers do not include overtime pay, commissions, or tips received.

Median hourly earnings. The median is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. The median is less sensitive to extreme wages than the mean; this makes it a better measure for highly skewed distributions.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Wage and salary workers paid hourly rates with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage, by state, 2015 annual averages

State	Number of workers (in thousands)				Percent distribution				Percentage of workers paid hourly rates		
	Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			At or below minimum wage		
		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage
Total, 16 years and older	78,232	2,561	870	1,691	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	3.3	1.1	2.2
Alabama	1,182	66	40	26	1.5	2.6	4.6	1.6	5.6	3.4	2.2
Alaska	209	3	1	2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	1.2	0.4	0.8
Arizona	1,627	44	6	38	2.1	1.7	0.7	2.2	2.7	0.4	2.3
Arkansas	712	22	10	12	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.7	3.1	1.4	1.7
California	9,667	115	25	90	12.4	4.5	2.9	5.3	1.2	0.3	0.9
Colorado	1,242	22	3	19	1.6	0.9	0.3	1.1	1.8	0.2	1.5
Connecticut	904	27	3	23	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.4	2.9	0.4	2.6
Delaware	236	6	2	4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	2.6	0.7	1.9
District of Columbia	112	3	1	2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	3.0	0.8	2.2
Florida	4,238	160	13	147	5.4	6.2	1.5	8.7	3.8	0.3	3.5
Georgia	2,173	95	46	49	2.8	3.7	5.3	2.9	4.4	2.1	2.3
Hawaii	356	10	5	5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	2.8	1.5	1.3
Idaho	458	21	15	6	0.6	0.8	1.7	0.4	4.6	3.2	1.4
Illinois	3,154	101	15	86	4.0	3.9	1.7	5.1	3.2	0.5	2.7
Indiana	1,779	69	32	37	2.3	2.7	3.7	2.2	3.9	1.8	2.1
Iowa	931	35	17	18	1.2	1.4	2.0	1.0	3.7	1.8	1.9
Kansas	794	33	16	17	1.0	1.3	1.8	1.0	4.1	2.0	2.1
Kentucky	1,090	38	15	23	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.4	3.5	1.4	2.1
Louisiana	1,094	70	38	32	1.4	2.8	4.4	1.9	6.4	3.5	2.9
Maine	359	10	2	8	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.5	2.7	0.5	2.2
Maryland	1,418	31	5	25	1.8	1.2	0.6	1.5	2.2	0.4	1.8
Massachusetts	1,651	48	9	39	2.1	1.9	1.1	2.3	2.9	0.6	2.3
Michigan	2,706	101	13	88	3.5	4.0	1.5	5.2	3.7	0.5	3.3
Minnesota	1,603	26	10	16	2.0	1.0	1.2	0.9	1.6	0.6	1.0
Mississippi	726	45	27	18	0.9	1.8	3.1	1.1	6.2	3.7	2.5
Missouri	1,583	57	13	44	2.0	2.2	1.5	2.6	3.6	0.8	2.8
Montana	294	6	2	4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.0	0.7	1.3
Nebraska	558	13	4	9	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.3	0.7	1.6
Nevada	794	20	9	10	1.0	0.8	1.1	0.6	2.5	1.2	1.3
New Hampshire	389	16	5	11	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.7	4.1	1.2	2.9
New Jersey	1,803	50	8	42	2.3	2.0	0.9	2.5	2.8	0.4	2.3
New Mexico	511	16	3	13	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.8	3.1	0.5	2.5
New York	4,015	97	24	74	5.1	3.8	2.7	4.4	2.4	0.6	1.8
North Carolina	2,374	122	55	66	3.0	4.8	6.4	3.9	5.1	2.3	2.8
North Dakota	222	5	2	4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.3	0.7	1.6
Ohio	3,219	93	16	77	4.1	3.6	1.8	4.6	2.9	0.5	2.4
Oklahoma	967	29	15	15	1.2	1.1	1.7	0.9	3.0	1.5	1.5
Oregon	1,015	7	3	5	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.5
Pennsylvania	3,524	150	54	96	4.5	5.9	6.2	5.7	4.3	1.5	2.7
Rhode Island	312	5	0	5	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.3	1.5	0.1	1.5
South Carolina	1,191	56	34	22	1.5	2.2	4.0	1.3	4.7	2.9	1.8
South Dakota	261	6	1	5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	2.4	0.4	2.1
Tennessee	1,649	77	35	42	2.1	3.0	4.0	2.5	4.7	2.1	2.5
Texas	6,070	287	111	176	7.8	11.2	12.8	10.4	4.7	1.8	2.9
Utah	776	25	13	12	1.0	1.0	1.5	0.7	3.3	1.7	1.5
Vermont	175	3	0	3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	1.9	0.2	1.6
Virginia	1,919	120	50	69	2.5	4.7	5.8	4.1	6.2	2.6	3.6
Washington	1,795	19	7	12	2.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.4	0.7
West Virginia	433	15	5	10	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	3.4	1.0	2.3
Wisconsin	1,781	61	30	31	2.3	2.4	3.5	1.8	3.4	1.7	1.7
Wyoming	179	6	3	4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	3.5	1.4	2.1

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Note: Data exclude all self-employed workers, whether or not their businesses are incorporated. These data are based on a sample and therefore are subject to sampling error; the degree of error may be quite large for less populous states. Unrounded data were used in all calculations.

Table 2. Employed wage and salary workers paid hourly rates with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage and median earnings of hourly paid workers in Idaho, by gender, annual averages, 2005-2015

Year	Number of workers (in thousands)				Percentage of workers paid hourly rates			Median earnings (in dollars)
	Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			At or below minimum wage			
		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	
Men								
2005	200	4	2	2	2.0	1.0	1.0	$11.83
2006	212	4	2	2	1.9	0.9	0.9	12.29
2007	222	3	1	2	1.4	0.5	0.9	12.88
2008	207	4	1	3	1.9	0.5	1.4	13.78
2009	189	12	5	7	6.3	2.6	3.7	12.83
2010	193	11	5	6	5.7	2.6	3.1	13.73
2011	184	7	5	2	3.8	2.7	1.1	12.42
2012	208	14	6	8	6.7	2.9	3.8	13.31
2013	205	12	10	2	5.9	4.9	1.0	13.13
2014	206	9	6	3	4.4	2.9	1.5	13.88
2015	227	9	6	3	4.0	2.6	1.3	14.92
Women								
2005	215	9	3	6	4.2	1.4	2.8	9.80
2006	212	9	3	6	4.2	1.4	2.8	10.37
2007	202	9	3	6	4.5	1.5	3.0	10.40
2008	205	11	3	8	5.4	1.5	3.9	10.25
2009	198	13	4	9	6.6	2.0	4.5	11.16
2010	203	19	10	9	9.4	4.9	4.4	11.00
2011	195	12	7	5	6.2	3.6	2.6	11.34
2012	196	17	10	7	8.7	5.1	3.6	11.88
2013	205	17	11	6	8.3	5.4	2.9	11.83
2014	207	12	6	6	5.8	2.9	2.9	11.89
2015	231	13	9	4	5.6	3.9	1.7	12.12

Note: Data exclude all self-employed persons whether or not their businesses are incorporated. Data for 2007–2009 reflect changes in the minimum wage that took place in those years.