

Workers Across Colorado Need \$15 and One Fair Wage



Colorado



The Raise the Wage Act, which would raise the minimum wage for all workers in the United States to \$15 an hour and phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers, would significantly reduce poverty in Colorado.

➤ In Colorado, the minimum wage is \$12.32 for all workers, while the subminimum wage stands at only \$9.30 for tipped workers.^{1,2}

Although the hourly median wage in Colorado is \$21.28, half of workers make far less.³ Nearly a quarter of the total workforce (608,000 workers) earns an hourly median wage below \$15. Those who earn less than \$15 an hour work primarily in the service industry and are essential workers.⁴ Workers earning under \$15 comprise 58% of all workers receiving food stamp benefits in Colorado.⁵ The food service sector is one of the largest employers in Colorado, and it provides some of the lowest wages in the state.⁶

TABLE 1: TOP 10 LARGEST OCCUPATIONS IN COLORADO

JOB TITLE	Workforce	Median Hourly Wage
Retail Salespersons	82,750	\$12.81
Fast Food and Counter Workers	71,430	\$11.80
Cashiers	55,790	\$12.19
Registered Nurses	52,510	\$36.10
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	50,930	\$38.18
Waiters and Waitresses	49,420	\$10.64
Customer Service Representative	48,650	\$17.11
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	44,510	\$52.83
Stockers and Order Fillers	40,590	\$15.03
Office Clerks, General	39,570	\$19.22

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (May 2019). Occupational Employment Statistics - Colorado. All Occupations and hourly median wage. https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_co.htm

TABLE 2: OTHER OCCUPATIONS UNDER \$15

JOB TITLE	Workforce	Median Hourly Wage
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	20,420	\$12.83
Food Preparation Workers	13,610	\$12.92
Farmworkers and Laborers Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	3,310	\$14.70
Packers and Packagers, Hand	7,590	\$12.32
Childcare Workers	10,110	\$13.79
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	10,520	\$11.81
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	3,880	\$12.19
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	35,790	\$12.54
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	6,020	\$13.65

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (May 2019). Occupational Employment Statistics - Colorado. All Occupations and hourly median wage. https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_co.htm



onefairwage.org



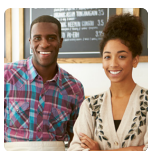
Most Essential Workers Lack a Living Wage to Feed Their Families

➤ Over a quarter of all workers (28%) who earn under \$15 an hour in Colorado have at least one child. In Colorado, a single adult with just one child will need \$35.15 hourly or about \$73,000 annually to cover minimal rent, food, transportation, and other basic living costs.⁷ However, 61% of Colorado workers, who work predominantly in the food, health, and general service industry, still fall far below the liveable wages necessary to provide for their families.⁸

TABLE 5: TIPPED WORKERS DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENT VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

66%	Women Tipped Workers
32%	People of Color Tipped Workers
23%	Tipped Workers with Children
9%	Tipped Workers Using Food Stamps

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V10.0>



Colorado Workers Would Thrive with One Fair Wage

➤ Currently, 9.3% of the total Colorado population (5,758,736) lives in poverty.¹⁰ Using the federal poverty line,¹¹ currently at least 353,684 Colorado workers who are currently employed live under the poverty level. **All of these workers would be lifted out of poverty by raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for all workers, including tipped workers, reducing the poverty level in Colorado to 3.16%, a 66.04% reduction in the state poverty level.**

1 U.S. Department of Labor. (January 2021). State Minimum Wage Laws. Accessed 02/08/21. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state>.

2 U.S. Department of Labor. (January 2021). Minimum Wage for Tipped Employees. Accessed 02/10/21. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/state/minimum-wage/tipped>.

3 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (May 2019). Occupational Employment Statistics - Colorado. All Occupations and hourly median wage. https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_co.htm.

4 Ibid.

5 One Fair Wage calculation based on 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates using Steven Ruggles et al., IPUMS USA: Version 11.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V11.0>.

6 See note 3.

7 MIT Living Wage Calculator - Colorado as a whole, Accessed 02/11/21, <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/08>.

8 See note 3.

9 See note 5.

10 U.S. Census. (2019). Quick Facts: Colorado. Accessed 02/11/21. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CO/INC110219>.

11 The 2019 federal poverty line is \$12,490 for a household of 1 and increases by \$4,420 for each additional household member. For a conservative estimate, we calculated the number of currently employed workers in households of 1 who earned less than \$10,000 and the number of currently employed workers in households of 2 or more who earned less than \$15,000 to produce the total number of currently employed workers who earn less than the federal poverty line. A \$15 wage would bring all of these workers above the federal poverty line for all households of 1 and 2 or more.

12 See note 3.

13 See note 11.

TABLE 3: MEDIAN HOURLY WAGES (INCLUDING TIPS) IN COLORADO

\$21.28	All Workers
\$13.23	All Workers Under \$15
\$12.24	All Tipped Workers

TABLE 4: ALL WORKERS WITH CHILDREN

37%	All Workers
28%	All Workers Under \$15
23%	All Tipped Workers

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. May 2019 Occupational Employment Statistics for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations. Customarily tipped restaurant positions: Bartenders, Waiters and Waitresses, Dishwashers, Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop, Cooks, Restaurant, Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers. Other non-restaurant tipped positions: Barbers, Hairdressers, Hair Stylists, and Cosmetologists, Baggage Porters and Bellhops, Parking Attendants, Usher, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers, Accessed 02/16/2021.

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V10.0>



Tipped Workers Disproportionately Represent Vulnerable Populations

◀ The subminimum wage for tipped workers, a literal legacy of slavery, disproportionately impacts women and workers of color in Colorado. Today, two-thirds (66%) of tipped workers in Colorado are women, and 32% are workers of color.⁹ Tipped workers use food stamps at nearly twice the rate of all other workers in Colorado.

TABLE 6: AMOUNT OF WORKERS IMPACTED BY \$15 MINIMUM WAGE

608,220	Workers Receiving Wage Increase ¹²
23%	All Workers Receiving Wage Increase
353,684	Workers Lifted Out of Poverty ¹³
66.04%	Reduction in State Poverty Level

Source: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 10.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V10.0>