

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Approves Minimum Wage Hike to \$16.50 an Hour

Increase effective next spring in unincorporated county

Redwood City — In a victory for workers, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors today voted to [increase the minimum wage](#) to \$16.50 an hour beginning next spring.

The move approved 5-0 applies to unincorporated areas that include North Fair Oaks and its Middlefield Road business corridor and agricultural land stretching from Pacifica to Pescadero.

Board President Don Horsley, who proposed the increase with Supervisor Dave Pine, said the boost in paychecks will help stimulate the economy and assist families and individuals in an increasingly expensive area.

“The pandemic pointedly demonstrated that we have workers who are considered essential across a variety of industries but who must choose between food, shelter and other needs just to make ends meet,” Horsley said.

“And one section of our workforce is vital but often invisible, that is the farmworkers who help to put food on our tables. While some farmworkers earn more than the minimum wage, this increase will ensure these essential workers have more money in their pockets each and every week,” Horsley said.

Eleven of the county’s 20 cities, making up over 70 percent of the county’s population, have already [raised the minimum wage](#) within their borders at a rate higher than the [state's base wage](#). The average minimum wage within the cities that have instituted their own ordinances is just over \$16.50 per hour starting in 2023. Raising the minimum wage in the unincorporated areas will create more consistency across jurisdictions.

“This ordinance will improve the lives of workers and their families,” Pine said. “And when we improve lives of local residents, we improve the stability and vitality of entire communities.”

Officials said they understand concerns that raising the base wage poses challenges for small businesses already hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rising costs of doing business.

However, raising the minimum wage across the county levels the playing field for all businesses, they said, while simultaneously improving worker purchasing power.

The increase approved today takes effect April 1, 2023, allowing for time to educate the public and let local businesses adapt to the new requirement. The wage in unincorporated communities would then increase at the same pace as the state minimum wage every January 1.

In California, the [minimum wage](#) for all employers, regardless of size, will increase to \$15.50 on Jan. 1, 2023.

The [federal minimum wage](#) for covered nonexempt employees is \$7.25 an hour.

In cases where an employee is subject to both the state and federal minimum wage laws, the employee is entitled to the higher of the two minimum wages.

Learn more at <https://www.smcgov.org/bos/proposal-raise-minimum-wage-unincorporated-areas>

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