

March 4, 2009

Alberta's minimum wage to increase to \$8.80 per hour

Edmonton... Alberta's 20,000 minimum wage earners will see an increase April 1 to \$8.80 per hour, up from the current \$8.40 per hour. The five-per-cent increase reflects 2008 growth to Alberta's average weekly earnings.

"We want to ensure that Albertans earning the minimum wage are as protected as possible during these changing times," said Hector Goudreau, Minister of Employment and Immigration. "While a vast majority of Albertans earn much more than the minimum wage, we can't forget about those in lower-income occupations."

The majority of Alberta's minimum wage earners are 15 to 19 years old and work in the accommodation and food services industry. The average hourly wage in Alberta is \$23.90.

On April 1, Alberta's minimum wage will rank second among provinces, although Saskatchewan, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador will surpass Alberta when their scheduled minimum wage increases come into effect between May and July.

Linking the minimum wage to Alberta's average weekly earnings was first adopted in June 2007. On April 1, 2008, Alberta's minimum wage increased from \$8 to \$8.40. Government policy states that if Alberta's average weekly earnings remain the same or decrease from one year to the next, the minimum wage will remain the same.

Employers and employees with questions about minimum wage can contact the Employment Standards Contact Centre toll-free at 1-877-427-3731 or visit employment.alberta.ca/es for more information.

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Attachments: Minimum wage 2009 backgrounder

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Barrie Harrison, Communications

Employment and Immigration

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To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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The tables below show Alberta's ranking today, Alberta's ranking as of April 1, and Alberta's ranking as of July 1 after other scheduled provincial increases take effect.

Alberta's minimum wage as of February 24, 2009

1st	Ontario	\$8.75
2nd	Saskatchewan	\$8.60
3rd (tied)	Newfoundland and Labrador	\$8.50
3rd (tied)	Quebec	\$8.50
3rd (tied)	Manitoba	\$8.50
6th	Alberta	\$8.40
7th	Nova Scotia	\$8.10
8th (tied)	British Columbia	\$8.00
8th (tied)	Prince Edward Island	\$8.00
10th	New Brunswick	\$7.75

Alberta's minimum wage as of April 1, 2009

1st	Ontario*	\$9.50
2nd	Alberta**	\$8.80
3rd(tied)	Saskatchewan	\$8.60
3rd(tied)	Nova Scotia**	\$8.60
5th (tied)	Newfoundland and Labrador	\$8.50
5th (tied)	Quebec	\$8.50
5th (tied)	Manitoba	\$8.50
8th (tied)	British Columbia	\$8.00
8th (tied)	Prince Edward Island	\$8.00
10th	New Brunswick	\$7.75

Alberta's minimum wage as of July 1, 2009

1st	Ontario*	\$9.50
2nd	Saskatchewan****	\$9.25
3rd (tied)	Quebec****	\$9.00

3rd (tied)	Newfoundland and Labrador*****	\$9.00
5th	Alberta**	\$8.80
6th	Manitoba****	\$8.75
7th	Nova Scotia**	\$8.60
8th (tied)	British Columbia	\$8.00
8th (tied)	Prince Edward Island	\$8.00
8th (tied)	New Brunswick***	\$8.00

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*Effective March 31, 2009

**Effective April 1, 2009

***Effective April 15, 2009

**** Effective May 1, 2009

*****Effective July 1, 2009

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