



Boulder County's Local Minimum Wage

To respond to the needs of unincorporated Boulder County's lowest paid workers in the face of the rising cost of living, the Boulder County Commissioners unanimously passed the county's local minimum wage ordinance in November 2023. The new wage went into effect on January 1, 2024. Through a series of annual increases, the minimum wage for unincorporated Boulder County will rise to \$25 by 2030.

Responding to the Needs of Unincorporated Boulder County's Lowest Paid Workers

- Family Resource Centers and other safety net providers and public benefits programs across Boulder County have experienced an unprecedented demand exacerbated by the pandemic, inflation, and the rising cost of housing.¹
- A family of four now needs the equivalent of four full-time minimum wage earners to provide the basic necessities of life.²

Analysis of Denver's Local Minimum Wage

- Denver adopted a local minimum wage in 2020. An analysis completed by the Colorado Department of Labor & Employment showed that Denver's unemployment rate dropped and sales tax revenues increased, in comparison to regional peer jurisdictions, after the adoption of its local minimum wage.³

¹ Emergency Family Assistance Association. EFAA. *Increasing the Minimum Wage in Boulder: Policy Brief*. <https://www.efaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/EFAA-Minimum-Wage-Policy-Position-July-2023.pdf>

² Emergency Family Assistance Association. EFAA. *Boulder County Community Wellbeing Dashboard 2023*. <https://www.efaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023-Boulder-County-Community-Dashboard.pdf>

³ https://cdle.colorado.gov/sites/cdle/files/Local_Min_Wage_Report_2023_1.pdf

Regional Alignment of Wages

Boulder County's local minimum wage will increase to \$16.57 per hour in 2025. This increase was designed to allow any jurisdiction that is implementing a local minimum wage in 2025 to align to the same wage by increasing wages by 14.9% over the 2024 state minimum wage.

Minimum Wage in Colorado⁴

Location	2023	2024	2025	Increase (%) between 2024 & 2025
Boulder County	\$13.65	\$15.69	\$16.57	5.6%
Denver	\$17.29	\$18.29	\$18.81	2.8%
Edgewater	\$13.65	\$15.02	\$16.52	10%
Colorado	\$13.65	\$14.42	\$14.81*	2.7%

* Tentative number - will be finalized before 2025 by Colorado Department of Labor & Employment.

Community Engagement

In advance of adopting its local minimum wage, Boulder County completed the following community engagement efforts:

- Online survey available in English and Spanish; 355 total respondents, with a majority of respondents favoring an increase in the county minimum wage to \$25 per hour by 2028.
- Listening sessions conducted in partnership with the Small Business Development Center, Latino Chamber of Commerce, Boulder County Self-Sufficiency Wage Coalition, and Human Services Alliance of Boulder County.
- A town hall hosted by the Boulder County Commissioners, held in Niwot.
- Survey results and community engagement session outcomes shared with the municipal working group that is exploring a regional minimum wage.
- A public hearing on November 2, 2023.

Background

- In 2019, the Colorado legislature granted authority to local governments to adopt jurisdiction-specific local minimum wages, with the enabling legislation encouraging regional application of minimum wages that are higher than the state minimum wage.

⁴ Source: Chuang, T. August 7, 2024. The Colorado Sun. *All the New Minimum Wages in Colorado that Kick In Jan. 1.* <https://coloradosun.com/2024/08/07/colorado-denver-edgewater-boulder-minimum-wages-2025/>

Visit boco.org/minimumwage for more information in English and Spanish.