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Washington's minimum wage set at \$8.67 next year

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TUMWATER – Washington's minimum wage will increase to \$8.67 per hour beginning January 1, 2011, the [Department of Labor & Industries](#) announced today.

L&I calculates the state's [minimum wage](#) each year as required by Initiative 688, approved by Washington voters in 1998. The 12-cent increase reflects a 1.4% increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) since August 2009. The [CPI-W](#) is a national index covering the cost of goods and services needed for day-to-day living.

The minimum wage was \$8.55 in both 2009 and 2010 due to a CPI-W decrease.

"With the CPI-W increase of 1.4%, minimum wage will increase 12-cents," said L&I director Judy Schurke. "Our best read of the law is that when the cost of living rises over the previous 12-month period, the minimum wage rises accordingly."

Washington is one of ten states, with Oregon, Vermont, Ohio, Nevada, Montana, Missouri, Florida, Colorado, and Arizona, that adjusts the minimum wage based on inflation and the CPI. Oregon, Ohio, Colorado and Montana have already announced increases in their minimum wage.

Washington's minimum wage applies to workers in both agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, although 14- and 15-year-olds may be paid 85 percent of the adult minimum wage, or \$7.37.

Differing legal opinions, including one from the Attorney General's office, were considered before determining the increase. After reviewing those opinions and the actions of other states with similar laws, L&I concluded that they would follow the interpretation believed most likely to be adopted by the courts.

More information on Washington's minimum wage is available at [Wages.Lni.wa.gov](#). Employers and workers also may call 360-902-5316 or 1-866-219-7321.

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