New Hampshire Has the Region’s Lowest Minimum Wage

State Minimum Wage Laws in New England

Approximately two-thirds of minimum wage earners in the United States are women. In 2012, 64 percent of workers earning minimum wage were women, and women have made up between 60 and 70 percent of minimum wage workers during the last three decades.

NEW HAMPSHIRE IS THE ONLY STATE IN NEW ENGLAND THAT DOES NOT HAVE A STATE MINIMUM WAGE AND AS A RESULT HAS THE LOWEST MINIMUM WAGE IN THE REGION

Assuming New Hampshire’s numbers are consistent with the national data, approximately 8,300 New Hampshire women earn minimum wage or less.
The Declining Economic Value of the Minimum Wage

Although the federal minimum wage has increased several times since 1979, it confers far less economic value—in other words, far less buying power—than it did that year.

The 1979 minimum wage of $2.90 equates to $9.17 in 2012 dollars. That’s nearly $2.00 per hour more in buying power than the current minimum wage of $7.25. The minimum wage can’t buy what it used to!

Characteristics of Women Minimum-Wage Earners

US Women Earning at or Below Minimum Wage, by Age & Marital Status (2012) (in Thousands)

Not just teenagers: Nationally, nearly half of women ages 16 to 54 earning minimum wage or less are over age 25.

Sources:

1 Data provided by the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute (as of January 1, 2014)

2 The federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires payment of at least the federal minimum wage to covered, nonexempt employees. An employer of a tipped employee must pay $2.13 per hour in direct wages if that amount plus the employee’s tips equals at least the federal minimum wage, the employee retains all tips, and the employee customarily and regularly receives more than $30.00 a month in tips. If an employee’s tips combined with the employer’s direct wages do not equal the federal minimum hourly wage, the employer must make up the difference. Department of Labor information, available at http://www.dol.gov/elaws/faq/esa/flsa/002.htm

The mission of the New Hampshire Women’s Initiative is to advance social, economic, and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.

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