

Raising the wage: The public health impact of Oregon's 2016 minimum wage law

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PRESENTATION FORMAT: Oral Presentation

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public Health Policy

ABSTRACT: In 2016 the Oregon Legislature passed the nation's highest minimum wage, with workers in the Portland Metro area seeing their wages rise the most, from \$9.25 to \$14.75 an hour. When the wage increases are fully phased in over the next six years, over 600,000 workers will get a raise. As income is closely tied to health and life expectancy, Oregon's new minimum wage law will have a large impact on public health. Women and people of color make up a disproportionate share of the low-wage workforce, which means raising the wage will also reduce disparities. This presentation will describe the impact of the law and implications for other public health policy.

OBJECTIVE(S):

- Describe the demographics of low-wage workers
- Discuss the public health impacts of minimum wage increases
- Explain why Oregon's new law is a strong policy

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