

Missouri's minimum wage will rise in 2015, but there will be no change in Kansas

HIGHLIGHTS

Cost-of-living adjustments built into Missouri's minimum wage law will push the state's wage floor up to \$7.65 an hour on Jan. 1. The state's minimum has been \$7.50 an hour in 2014. The minimum wage in Kansas stays at \$7.25 an hour.

.....



BY DIANE STAFFORD
The Kansas City Star

Cost-of-living adjustments built into Missouri's minimum wage law will push the state's wage floor up to \$7.65 an hour on Jan. 1.

The state's minimum has been \$7.50 an hour in 2014.

Missouri is among 29 states that have, or will have as of Jan. 1, state minimums that are higher than the federal rate of \$7.25 an hour. In states that have their own minimum wage statutes, the higher of the state and federal rates must be paid by employers who are covered by the laws.

Workers in Kansas fall under the federal rate, which has not been raised since 2009.

A federal increase requires congressional action, a prospect sought by the White House and most Democrats but generally opposed by the Republican leadership.

The static federal rate has been the target of multiple wage protests across the country this year, particularly directed at the fast food industry.

Missouri and eight other states will have automatic increases in their state minimums as of Jan. 1 because of inflation indexes in their laws.

In addition, legislatures in 10 states and the District of Columbia enacted minimum wage increases during their 2014 legislative sessions. Four other states approved increases through ballot measures in their general elections this year.

Some of the higher state minimums: \$8.25 in Delaware, Illinois and New Jersey; \$8.75 in Alaska; \$9 in California and Massachusetts; \$9.10 in Oregon; \$9.15 in Connecticut and Vermont; \$9.32 in Washington; and \$10.50 in the District of Columbia. Some have already reached that level, and some will be new as of Jan 1.

For Missouri workers who are classified as “tipped employees” — earning an unspecified amount of their wages through gratuities — state law requires employers to pay a minimum cash wage that is half the legal minimum, allowing a “tip credit” to make up the other half of the minimum wage.

In 2014, that meant a \$3.75-an-hour cash requirement from employers to augment \$3.75 an hour in tips to reach the \$7.50 minimum.

In Kansas, employers of covered tipped workers are required to make a minimum cash payment of \$2.13 an hour, the federal tipped minimum wage, with the balance of the \$7.25-an-hour federal compensation to be made up by \$5.12 an hour in tips.

Federal law says that if an employee’s tips combined with the employer’s direct wages of at least \$2.13 an hour do not equal the federal minimum hourly wage, the employer must make up the difference.

According to the Congressional Research Office, the peak value of the federal minimum wage in real terms was in 1968. To equal the purchasing power of the 1968 minimum wage, the 2014 minimum wage should have been \$10.69 instead of \$7.25. As it was, the minimum wage’s buying power didn’t keep up with increases in consumer prices.

To reach Diane Stafford, call 816-234-4359 or send email to stafford@kcstar.com. Follow her online at kansascity.com/workplace. Twitter: [@kcstarstafford](https://twitter.com/kcstarstafford).



MORE BUSINESS

YOU MAY LIKE

Sponsored Links by Taboola 

Worst Exercise For Middle Age -- Ages You Faster

Top 4 Balance Transfer Cards of 2016

LendingTree


Early 2016 Stock Pick of the Year - RBCC

Rainbow Sciences - RBCC

MSN partnership with Taboola may threaten Google's ad reach

Taboola in the news

YOU MAY LIKE

Sponsored Links by Taboola 

Living In Denial Of How Much You Spend On Razors?

Harry's

Top 4 Balance Transfer Cards of 2016

LendingTree

Early 2016 Stock Pick of the Year - RBCC

Rainbow Sciences - RBCC

MSN partnership with Taboola may threaten Google's ad reach

Taboola in the news

COMMENTS

Comments have been disabled for this story.



SPONSORED CONTENT

These Two Guys are Crying About the Razors They Make. The Reason Why Could Make You Shed a Tear

By Gillette
