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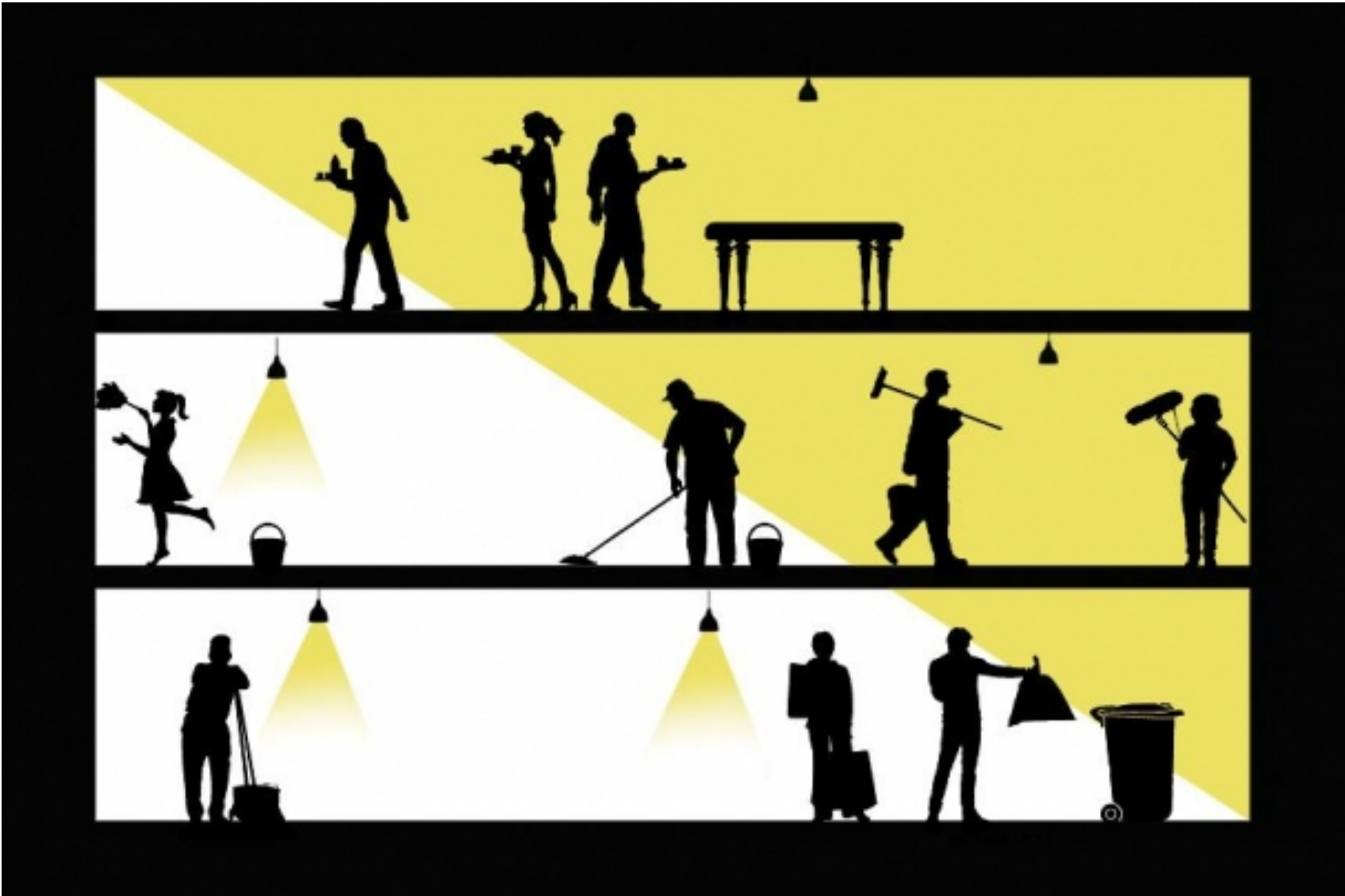
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Anson Stevens-Bollen

Santa Fe Minimum Wage to Increase In March

Amid enforcement questions, city focuses on outreach

January 16, 2015, 4:40 pm
By Justin Horwath

Starting March 1, minimum wage earners who work inside city limits can expect a pay-bump of 18 cents per hour.

That's the date all Santa Fe businesses must start paying workers at least \$10.84 per hour, up from the current minimum-wage rate of \$10.66 per hour.

The increase comes because the city's living-wage ordinance calls for adjustments to the rate based on movements in the Consumer Price Index for the Western Region for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

"Originally, the Living Wage Ordinance included a provision to increase the wage to \$10.50

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July 26, 2016 by Peter St. Cyr

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in 2008," states a city press release. "Instead, the community came together in 2007 for a compromise, and replaced the planned increase to \$10.50 with an annual cost of living adjustment in order to help ensure that workers' wages would keep pace with inflation."

The index tracks prices of basic goods paid by urban workers in the region.

In 2014, according to the city, that index increased 1.69 percent.

The increase means that, before taxes and deductions, wages for employees working 40 hours per week will increase by \$14.40 per bimonthly paycheck and \$345.60 per year.

Businesses are able to count tips and commissions toward paying an employee minimum wage so long as the employee "customarily" receives more than \$100 in tips and commissions in a month.

Businesses inside city limits must pay all employees minimum wage, including part-time employees.

According to city figures, the minimum-wage rate, originally set at \$8.50, increased to \$10.29 in 2012; \$10.51 in 2013; and \$10.66 in 2014.

The city's minimum-wage is the fourth-highest in the nation, says Santa Fe spokesman Matt Ross.

The city, however, has **struggled** with enforcement over the years. Of the six complaints filed against businesses for not paying the minimum wage in 2014, none of the employees who filed the complaints had received the money they allege to be owed, as of early January.

Ross tells SFR that the city is focusing on both enforcement of the ordinance as well as educating businesses and groups who work with minimum wage earners about the increase.

Ross says city officials will send information about the March 1 wage increase in all utility bills, as well as distribute posters about the minimum wage rate that businesses are required to post. Officials will also distribute information about the increase via social media, he says.

"We're doing everything we can to reach out and it's definitely something that we're really excited about," he says.



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