2025 Living Wage Insights for Employers

United Way Perth-Huron
Social Research & Planning Council
Ontario Living Wage Network

What is a Living Wage?

A living wage is the hourly rate a worker needs to earn for their household to meet its basic needs, including food, housing, utilities, childcare, and transportation.

Why Pay a Living Wage?

A living wage is not the same as the minimum wage; it reflects what people need to earn to cover the actual costs of living in our communities. The concept of a living wage is bigger than income. It's about quality of life. It's about ensuring our neighbours can afford to pay their rent and buy nutritious food, our workers are healthy and able to pay for transportation to get to work every day and our children are given sufficient social and educational opportunities so they can flourish.

Living wage employers care about their employees and the community. They recognize that paying a living wage constitutes a critical investment in the long-term prosperity of the economy by fostering a dedicated, skilled and healthy workforce.

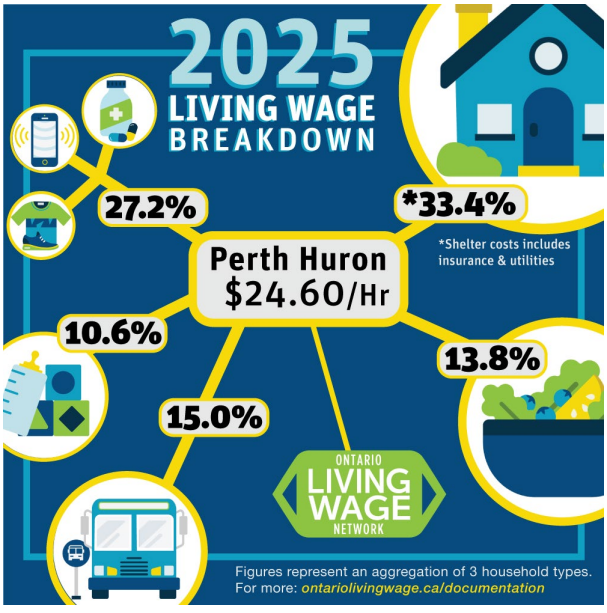
Impact of Paying a Living Wage[1]

- Across Ontario, 9% of employees from certified living wage employers had their wages increased due to the living wage in 2024. In our economic region[2], 20% of employees had their wages increased.
- Approximately 50% of total employers reported no cost of implementation of the living wage program.
- 33% of employers reported increased revenue due to paying a living wage.
- 62% of employers reported that paying a living wage helped attract new, qualified employees.
- 80% of employers reported that paying a living wage had an overall positive effect on the workplace environment.

Quotes From Certified Employers

"By offering a higher salary than our competitors, we get to attract top talent, and we get to be picky with who we hire! As a service provider, the 'product' we sell is as good as our employees so having amazing employees is our priority."

"Employees have a better quality of life which reflects in their work."



[1] This information was collected by the Ontario Living Wage Network from certified living wage employers. It refers to Ontario-wide data unless otherwise stated

[2] Our economic region refers to Perth, Huron, Grey, Bruce, and Simcoe counties