



July 24, 2014 marks 5 years since the last time the federal minimum wage increased. For five years, the federal minimum wage has remained stagnant at \$7.25 an hour, meaning a family supported by a worker earning the minimum wage still lives below the poverty line — which is the case for far too many Americans today. Our nation can't wait any longer.

We need to raise the minimum wage so that workers can support themselves and their families. More money for these workers means more customers for business, and more customers means new jobs and a stronger economy for everyone.

On July 24th, join the national movement to raise the minimum wage by taking the Live the Wage Challenge.

THE CHALLENGE

The Live the Wage Challenge asks elected officials, community leaders, advocates and anyone concerned about the growing inequality in this country to walk in the shoes of a minimum wage worker by living on a minimum wage budget for one week. That's just \$77.

The Challenge is not easy, and it's not supposed to be. Workers who make the minimum wage have little, if any, leeway in how they spend their money each month. All too often, \$77 it is not enough to make it through a week, much less reinvest into a community. Many people who decide take this Challenge may simply spend more than that before the week is done — and that's okay. The Challenge is meant to give a glimpse into just how little the minimum wage provides a working family in this country.

Share your experience every day using the hashtag #LivetheWage. By sharing your experience, you'll participate in an active conversation on how important it is to raise the federal minimum wage.

WHEN

Thursday, July 24 to Wednesday, July 30.

THE DETAILS

After average taxes and housing expenses, the approximate weekly budget for someone earning the federal minimum wage is \$77. This is the budget you have to cover a week's worth of your meals, groceries, transportation, and recreational spending.



Some things to keep in mind:

- All meals count towards your \$77 total for the week. Dining out is expensive, and you may not be able to afford it. Given the low budget, you'll probably need to make most meals at home using groceries you buy for the week. Any cleaning supplies, toiletries, etc. should be included. And because minimum wage workers usually don't have this option, try not to eat free meals at other people's houses to skirt the budget.

Consider: using weekly coupons to save money.

- Gas is also expensive, so you may rely on public transportation instead of driving.

Consider: biking or walking to work if you can.

Please note: The Challenge is not a perfect mirror for the difficulty of making ends meet while earning the minimum wage. As a volunteer taking the Challenge, you're not expected or encouraged to default on any legal, financial, work or family obligations.

Be sure to track your daily spending throughout the week of the Challenge to see if you've made it.

WHO SHOULD JOIN?

You and everyone you know! Ask your friends, your neighbors, your congregation, your co-workers! Take the challenge with a friend and get your community involved. We want you to walk in the shoes of someone who earns the minimum wage for one week – and share your experience with as many people as you can.

LIFTING UP YOUR VOICE

The more participants share their experiences with others, the bigger the impact will be.

Be sure to share your experience on Facebook, Twitter and through other social media using #LiveTheWage!