



# Increasing the Minimum Wage in Contra Costa County

*A project of Ensuring Opportunity:  
The Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa County*



## WHO WE ARE:

**Ensuring Opportunity: The Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa County** is a collaborative, multi-sector initiative to end poverty in Contra Costa County by supporting policies that address poverty's root causes. Ensuring Opportunity includes nonprofit and public sector service providers, businesses, faith and labor organizations, policymakers, funders and community members. One of the Campaign's goals is to raise the minimum wage countywide, to ensure that all workers are paid fairly and earn enough to live on.

## WHAT WE WANT: \$15 MINIMUM WAGE COUNTYWIDE BY 2020

Because Contra Costa workers commute across city lines, a broad countywide effort to boost the minimum wage in all jurisdictions (cities as well as unincorporated areas) will help distribute the benefits of a wage increase throughout the county.



## WHY WE WANT THIS:

- **It's good for families: Paying fair wages will help hardworking individuals and families make ends meet:**
  - **131,000** Contra Costa residents — our friends, neighbors, coworkers — live below the Federal Poverty Level (\$23,850 for a family of four). **38,000** of these residents are children.
  - The **Contra Costa Self-Sufficiency Standard is \$71,711** (for a family of four), which requires two working adults to earn at least **\$17 per hour** to make ends meet.
  - A family of four with both adults working at the current minimum wage (\$9 per hour) earns just **\$37,440** annually. These families often must choose between rent, food, medicine and child care.
  - Higher wages mean **improved health and quality of life** for full-time workers and their children.
- **It's good for business: Paying fair wages will improve worker productivity and lower turnover costs:** Numerous studies have shown that higher wages motivate employees to work harder, attract more capable workers, reduce turnover, increase productivity and create higher sales revenue.
- **It's good for taxpayers: Paying fair wages will help families** improve their health and wellness, boost children's learning, and assist families in gaining financial stability, resulting in the need for fewer public subsidies.

Data source: "Contra Costa County's Proposed Minimum Wage Law: A Prospective Impact Study," UC Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, September 2015

**Additional research and studies about the impact of increasing the minimum wage are available at:  
[www.cutpovertycc.org](http://www.cutpovertycc.org)**