



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Frequently Asked Questions About the Minimum Wage in the 2016-17 State Budget

RICH FUNKE April 1, 2016



Q: Does the Budget implement a \$15/hr minimum wage Upstate?

A: The 2016-17 Budget calls for a multi-faceted increase to the state minimum wage based on geographic area. Under the Enacted Budget, the state minimum wage will increase to \$15/hr for most employers in New York City by 2019, to \$15/hr on Long Island and in Westchester County by 2021, and to \$12.50/hr Upstate by 2021.

Q: If the economy falters, could the scheduled minimum wage increases be suspended?

A: Yes. The budget requires an economic impact analysis to be conducted by region in 2019 and annually thereafter to determine if a suspension of the scheduled increases is necessary.

Q: What happens to the Upstate minimum wage after 2021?

A: The 2016-17 Budget calls for the Upstate minimum wage to increase no more than \$12.50 by 2021. As described above, the budget includes a "saftey valve" that could free the scheduled increases starting in 2019 and beyond, dependent on economic conditions, which could hold the minimum wage below \$12.50. If the minimum wage does reach \$12.50/hr by 2021, it would thereafter be indexed to inflation and cost of living factors.

Q: Who is responsible for determining the index for the Upstate minimum wage after 2021?

A: The Department of Budget in consultation with the Department of Labor.

Q: If the Budget authorizes the Department of Budget to determine the index after 2021, will Governor Cuomo ultimately control further increases to the minimum wage Upstate?

A: Governor Cuomo's current term expires December 31, 2018.

Q: Does the minimum wage provision in the 2016-17 Budget mirror Governor Cuomo's initial porposal?

A: No. In his 2016-17 Executive Budget proposal, Governor Cuomo called for the minimum wage to increase to \$15/hr state-wide by 2021. Under the Enacted Budget, the minimum wage will reach a maximum of \$12.50 for all areas Upstate by 2021.

Q: How is Upstate defined in the minimum wage provision of the 2016-17 Budget?

A: As it pertains to the minimum wage provision, Upstate is defined as all areas excepting the five boroughs of New York City, the entirety of Long Island, and Westchester County.