

## Building local resilience with living wages

There is no place in the province where someone can work a full-time minimum wage job and be able to pay all their bills. This gap is the largest in the GTA region (which includes Georgina), where the calculated living wage is currently \$26 per hour.

The [Ontario Living Wage Network](#) (OLWN) calculates living wage rates every year for ten regions in the province. The lowest rate is the London Elgin Oxford region at \$19.50.

We look at major expenses that workers face such as shelter costs, transportation, childcare, and food. We also take into account other expenses such as internet access, a modest annual vacation, clothing and more. Any applicable government taxes, transfers, and benefits are factored in as well, and what we get is an hourly wage that a worker must earn in order to make ends meet where they live.

In addition to calculating living wage rates, we at the OLWN also certifies employers who pay all workers at least a living wage. There are currently 629 such employers, and they can be found in our searchable directory here: [ontariolivingwage.ca/directory](https://ontariolivingwage.ca/directory).

With a \$17.20 minimum wage, one might ask why any employer would choose to pay more, especially for positions that are typically on the low end of the wage scale. The feedback from our employers is clear: they enjoy lower turnover, are able to attract better quality new hires, and have a positive standing in the communities where they operate. Many have been certified with us for 5 years or more and are able to follow each yearly increase to the local living wages while growing their business.

There are benefits to those communities as well. It is well understood that when the wages are raised for the lowest paid workers, that revenue is spent locally. There are also positive impacts to community health and cohesion when there are fewer people struggling to make ends meet.

For more, visit [ontariolivingwage.ca](https://ontariolivingwage.ca)

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