Living Wage BC | BC Policy Solutions | Alberni Clayoquot Health Network

2025 Living Wage

$22.60

Port Alberni Living Wage

What is the living wage?

The living wage is the hourly amount that a worker must earn to cover essentials, avoid chronic financial stress and participate in their community. It supports a basic, decent standard of living, but without many of the comforts or extras that many take for granted.

What makes up the living wage?

- Housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Phone & Internet
- Transport
- Child Care
- Non-MSP Health Costs
- Contingency Fund
- Adult Education
- Other Expenses

Benefits

Living expenses can decrease when benefits are paid by the employer.

- Health and Dental
- Professional Development
- Paid Sick Leave and Vacation

Not included in the living wage:

Retirement savings, student loan or credit card payments, cost of caring for an older or disabled family member.

How do we calculate the Living Wage?



Working with our community partners at the ACHN we calculate the wage needed by different household types to afford basic costs.

The family types used are a single adult, a single parent with one child, and a family of four with two adults and two children.

These are then weighted by their prevalence in the population to produce a single living wage for Port Alberni.

Who's not earning a Living Wage?

- Nearly 1 in 3 workers in BC earn less than the living wage - the minimum needed to cover basic expenses.
- Women and racialized workers are disproportionately affected.
- Jobs in food service, retail, and agriculture are among the lowest paid.

Key Findings from the 2025 Living Wage Report

- There is now a **$4.75** gap between the BC minimum wage and the living wage for Port Alberni**.** The provincial government needs to close the gap between the minimum wage and the living wage.
- Housing, food, and child care remain the largest and fastest-growing expenses, with rent increases outpacing general inflation and food insecurity worsening across BC.
- Government support helps, but it's not enough - especially for single people. Even when people are working hard, the minimum wage is not enough to cover rising costs like rent, food and child care.

Port Alberni Living Wage Breakdown

The Living Wage is an hourly rate calculated by averaging the expenses of three family types - a couple with two children, one school aged and one in daycare, a single parent and a single person household.

MONTHLY LIVING WAGE EXPENSES

	Family of Four	Single Parent Family	Single Person
Food	$1371.92	$710.64	$548.77
Clothing/footwear	$169.71	$84.85	$42.43
Housing (Including Utilities)	$2079.33	$1776.82	$1244.60
Phone/Internet	$150.17	$102.52	$102.52
Transport	$974.29	$487.14	$487.14
Childcare (Offset by BC Affordable Child Care Benefit)	$297.42 (originally $812.81)	$0.00 (originally $317.50)	NA
Non-MSP Health Costs (offset by 7 months of Canada Dental Benefit)	$135.21 (originally $231.00)	59.08 (originally $162.00)	$54.17 (originally $95.00)
Contingency Fund	$257.25	$104.13	$140.41
Education	$164.35	$164.35	$164.35
Other Expenses (Toiletries, cleaning supplies, household goods, Recreation, etc.)	$1012.22	$497.28	$343.24
Total	**$6,611.88**	**$3,986.83**	**$3,127.63**

ANNUAL LIVING WAGE INCOME AND EXPENSES

	Family of Four	Single Parent Family	Single Person
Employment Income	$40,131.00 X2	$32,487.00	$43,807.40
Annual After-Tax Income	$34,059.67	$33,226.89	$36,646.38
Government Transfers*	$11,790.05	$14,819.30	$888.00
Available Income	**$79,363.86**	**$48,046.19**	**$37,543.38**
Annual Expenses	**$79,342.56**	**$47,841.94**	**$37,534.38**

**Government Transfers Include - GST Credit, BC Climate Action Tax Credit, Canada Child Benefit, BC Family Benefit, Rental Assistance Program, if applicable. Only the Single Parent Family was qualified for the Rental Assistance Program.*

What Can Local Government Do?

Municipalities and Regional Districts play a key role in policy, support and services which assist in decreasing the out of pocket expenses of community members.

- The Living Wage in the Alberni Valley would be $2 less for a family of four if the **Transit system** was robust enough to rely on just one vehicle or solely transit for a single person.
- Communities with a strong **housing continuum** have seen drastic decreases to their living wage. Affordable and supportive housing which supports low to median income earners keeps money in the hands of individuals.
- Support for affordable **childcare centres and healthy food programs** ensure families are well supported.

What Else Can Be Done to Support?

- Advocacy and support for Provincial and Federal Governamts to **stengthen and extend supports for low and medium income individuals - Dental, Child Care Benefit, GST and others.** Ex: The Canada Child Care Benefit is reduced by a % of the families income greater than $37,387, once the family income is greater than $81,222 the benefit is reduced by a fixed amount which has real implications for families in low to middle income households.
- Advocacy for provincial and federal policies to lift wages and lower costs, aim to close the gap between the minium wage and living wage.
- Support for programs that assits individuals to reduce the cost of living
- Employers and Local Governments can become a living wage employer, more details on the Living Wage Website.