



## Niagara Poverty Reduction Network (NPRN)

Working collectively to wipe out poverty through education, collaboration and advocacy to address poverty's root causes.

### ***NPRN Living Wage Position Statement***

A living wage is a valuable policy lever to ensure Niagara wage earners are paid a level of income to meet basic family household needs and inclusion in community activities.

### ***Living Wage Background***

A living wage is not the same as the minimum wage, which is the legal minimum all employers must pay. The living wage sets a higher test – it reflects what earners in a family need to be paid based on the actual costs of living and being included in a specific community. The living wage is calculated as an evidence-based hourly rate at which a household can meet its basic needs, once government transfers have been added to the family's income and deductions have been subtracted. Included in this calculation are food, shelter, clothing, transportation, child care, private health insurance for prescription drugs, dental coverage and life/disability insurance, continuing education for adults to upgrade skills, as well as items that allow for fuller participation in society, such as communication, family leisure outings and local recreation.

The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network has estimated a living wage for a family of four (two adults working full time, one child age 7, one child age 3) in Niagara is \$17.47/hr (2016). If an employer provides health benefits and life/disability insurance, the living wage is lowered to \$14.47/hr.

### ***Benefits of a Living Wage***

For Employers	For Employees/Workers	For the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced absenteeism</li> <li>• Decreased turnover rates</li> <li>• Lower recruitment and training costs</li> <li>• Increased employee morale, productivity and loyalty</li> <li>• Recognized as a socially responsible employer</li> <li>• Positive reputation and corporate image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid fair compensation for their work</li> <li>• Raised above poverty line</li> <li>• Improved health and reduced stress</li> <li>• Better quality of life</li> <li>• Broader opportunities for community participation and inclusion</li> <li>• Increased opportunities for education/skills training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased consumer spending power that can stimulate the local economy</li> <li>• Increased civic engagement and participation</li> <li>• Improved health of the community as a whole</li> </ul>

### ***Resources***

- Living Wage Canada - <http://www.livingwagecanada.ca/>
- Living Wage Hamilton - <http://livingwagehamilton.ca/>
- Living Wage Waterloo Region - <http://livingwagewr.org/>
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Ontario Office - <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/offices/ontario/livingwageON>

