

Minimum Wage Increases and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits

Hourly Minimum Wage Changes in Washington State

Year	Washington State	Seattle*	SeaTac*	Tacoma
2022	\$14.49	\$15.00 – \$16.39**	\$17.53	\$14.49
2023	\$15.74	\$16.50 – \$18.69**	19.06	\$15.74

*These cities have higher minimum wage rates than Washington State

**Amount varies based on company size and amount contributed to medical benefits

How Minimum Wage Increases Affect SSI

SSI is generally reduced by about \$1 for every \$2 earned. So, for every \$2 that your monthly wages increase – whether due to a change in minimum wage, an increase in work hours, or a raise – your SSI only goes down by about \$1. Overall, you end up with more total income!

Here is a comparison of a person working 20 hours per week at the WA minimum wage amounts in 2022 and 2023. Notice how the person has greater total income in 2023 due to the increase in minimum wage.

20 hours per week @ \$14.49 per hour	
Monthly Gross Wages	\$1254
- General Exclusion	- \$20
- Earned Income Exclusion	- \$65
Subtotal	\$1,169
Divide Subtotal by 2	\$1,169 / 2
Equals "Countable Income"	\$584.50
SSI 2022*	\$841
- Countable Income	- \$584.50
Adjusted SSI Amount	256.50
Total Income: \$1,254 wages + \$256.50	\$1,510.50
SSI	\$1,510.50
\$1,254	\$256
Wages	SSI
	Total

*Based on the 2022 Federal Benefit Rate

20 hours per week @ \$15.74 per hour	
Monthly Gross Wages	\$1,363
- General Exclusion	- \$20
- Earned Income Exclusion	- \$65
Subtotal	\$1,278
Divide Subtotal by 2	\$1,278 / 2
Equals "Countable Income"	\$639.00
SSI 2023*	\$914
- Countable Income	- \$639
Adjusted SSI Amount	\$275.00
Total Income: \$1,363 wages + \$275	\$1,638.00
SSI	\$1,638.00
\$1,363	\$275
Wages	SSI
	Total

*Based on the 2023 Federal Benefit Rate

What Happens if a Wage Increase Reduces my SSI to \$0?

If your wages increase so much that your SSI cash benefits are reduced to \$0, you may be protected under the work incentive "1619b."

Under 1619b, you can earn at least \$48,677 per year (2023 figure), remain eligible for SSI – even though you are not receiving a check – and maintain Medicaid eligibility. In some cases, people can earn more.

To qualify for 1619b, you must need Medicaid in order to work. You must also continue to follow the SSI rules: report income each month, and have less than \$2,000 in resources on the first day of each month.