

BC Greens believe every worker has the right to a fair wage, a safe and respectful workplace, and a real say in the decisions that affect their job, and we'll stand with working people to protect those rights.

The Government must create the conditions for workers and businesses to thrive. But the last few years have been hard on working people. Inflation has eaten away at paycheques, new technologies have changed how we work, and the trade dispute with the United States has shaken entire industries. While workers struggled, mega-corporations used inflation as cover for price-gouging during COVID-19, and the wealth of Canadian billionaires on the Forbes list grew by 37.2% between July 2023 and July 2025.¹

Many people working full-time still can't make ends meet. In Vancouver and Victoria, the minimum wage is now more than \$9 an hour below the living wage,² and one in five food bank visits is made by someone with a full-time job. The burden isn't shared equally: nearly half of racialized women earn less than the living wage, compared with just over one in five non-racialized men."³⁴

Solutions lie in empowering the people who do the labour. Working people, employers, and unions should be involved in making decisions about issues in their workplaces, the economy, and the environment. Workplace democracy and collective organization are essential to address the inherent inequality of power between employers and employees. Sectoral bargaining, where employees working for different employers but in the same sector negotiate together is one way to achieve this, particularly in smaller workplaces and dispersed sectors, such as home healthcare. While a powerful tool for employees, many employers are also supportive, given the benefits of simplifying negotiations and bringing stability to a sector.⁵ This encourages competition based on quality and service, rather than a race to the bottom on how little workers can be paid.

The BC Greens will:

- Increase the minimum wage annually, at a rate of inflation +1%, until parity with the living wage is reached.
- Implement a pilot model of sectoral bargaining following a modified version of the 1992 Baigent-Ready model updated to reflect the 2026 economy and job market. The pilot would focus on especially precarious workers with minimal access to traditional

¹ <https://bcpolicy.ca/2026/02/11/tax-the-rich/>

² <https://bcpolicy.ca/2026/05/28/wage-gap/>

³ <https://bcpolicy.ca/2026/05/28/wage-gap/>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ <https://thetyee.ca/News/2025/10/10/Could-One-Change-Vulnerable-BC-Workers/>

collective bargaining, including migrant care workers, retail and service workers, and fast-food and food service workers.

- Develop a labour market impact assessment and strategy, in conjunction with business, unions, young people and academics, to respond to the structural employment challenges of AI and new technologies. This will include supports for workers displaced by new technologies, strategies for ensuring roles are available for young and inexperienced workers, and a review of how our employment insurance and social assistance systems need to adjust, such as moving to Universal Basic Income.
- Reverse the NDP's proposed direct delivery of refreshment beverages, which opens the door to the privatization of BC Liquor's distribution centres and related work.
- Commit to all public infrastructure and construction projects being Project Labour Agreements or Community Benefit Agreements to ensure the work and wealth produced by these projects stays close to home and with the communities and workers that build them.
- Upgrade the existing Pay Transparency legislation to implement Pay Equity, mirroring that already in place for federal workers, and ensuring all working people in BC, no matter their gender or race, receive equal pay for equal work.

Q&A

1. Can small businesses afford increases in the minimum wage?

This announcement is part of a package that looks to improve supports for small businesses, including making sure the government is sending work their way. Increasing the minimum wage has costs for business, but it has benefits too; increased wages are spent locally, driving up business income.

This section is part of a series of changes that the BC Greens will make that impact our lowest paid workers - many of which will also reduce the living wage, by making housing and life affordable again.

Collectively, the BC Greens are attempting to make sure that the economy is working for people, as much as people are working for the economy.

2. What is sectoral bargaining and why do we need it?

In some labour-intensive sectors of the economy, employers may be able to compete by holding down or reducing terms and conditions offered to workers, often described as a 'race to the bottom'. This type of competition makes it difficult for workers and individual employers to negotiate improved terms and conditions, and can under-compensate workers for the value of their work. Poor terms and conditions are likely to lead to an increase in staff turnover, reduced incentives to make investment that could make staff more productive and a reduction in the quality of services. Existing labour market regulations do not prevent this effect from occurring.

Sectoral bargaining helps by allowing for the establishment of a base set of terms and conditions, including pay, for an entire sector rather than an individual company.