

## **\$7.25 is now 12 Years Old**

Congress last raised the minimum wage in May 2007, with an effective date of 7/24/2009. It has been 12 years since that congressional action, the longest period without a federal minimum wage increase since a minimum wage law was adopted in 1938.

Until the 1980s, federal minimum wage increased about every five years. Since then, the gaps between increases continues to expand.

Federal minimum wage standards require employers across the country to pay minimum wage (there are lower wage standards for tipped, agriculture and teen workers). All but four states have adopted specific state minimum wage standards.

**Wisconsin is one of only 16 states that has kept the \$7.25 minimum wage,** whereas 30 states have established a higher minimum wage that employers must follow.

Although minimum wage remains at \$7.25, many entry-level jobs in Wisconsin pay more because there is a labor shortage. The fast food industry was one of the first to raise starting wages because they were not able to recruit enough employees.

Should you settle for minimum wage? That depends on your situation. If you are a 16-year old looking for your first job in a limited labor market (i.e. rural or small town), minimum wage may be fine as gaining experience is more important than the wage. But, if you are 26 (or any adult), minimum wage will likely not be enough to pay basic living expenses.

FSET works with customers to develop a career path and find employers who provide both good opportunities and higher wages. Our Career Services Team has developed dozens of employer relationships to help facilitate direct connections between customers and local employers. Contact us today to find out more!

For more information on minimum wage, check out the [Department of Labor website](#).