

FACT SHEET ON THE IMPACT OF THE STATE MANDATED MINIMUM WAGE LAW  
ON FFA SOCIAL WORKERS, KIDS AND FAMILIES

- **State Mandated Minimum Wage Act:** In 2016, the California Legislature laudably increased the State minimum wage for all employees and accelerated the increase for employers with 26 or more employees to \$15/hour by 2022 over a 6-year period beginning in 2017 [*SB 3 – Leno, statutes of 2016; Labor Code Section 1182.12 (b)*].
- **Foster Family Agency Social Workers Require Additional Funding:** \$26.7 million is needed to address the impact on nonprofit Foster Family Agency Social Workers to bring their salaries in compliance with the State Mandated Minimum Wage Act.
- **Requirement of an Annual Increase of 3.5% or CPI:** The law also requires a further increase at the beginning of each subsequent calendar year at the lesser of 3.5% or the change in the U.S. Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (U.S. CPI-W).
- **One of Only Two Foster Care Programs with No CNI:** Except for the portion of the rate that goes directly to resource families, FFA rates are one of only two state-set foster care rates that receive no annual increase linked to the California Necessities Index (CNI). Sadly, the other program that does not receive the CNI-based increase is the Infant Supplement. These multi-year rate freezes without a Cost of Living Annual increase (COLA) make it difficult to recruit and retain dedicated and Master’s level qualified social workers.
- **Professional Employees Must Earn Double the Minimum Wage:** California law requires that salaries must be at least double the minimum wage in order for professionals to be considered exempt (*Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Order 4*).
  - ✓ In 2018, the minimum wage was \$11/hour for employers with 26 or more employees, which translated to a wage of at least \$22/hour for an annual salary of \$45,760 for professionals.
  - ✓ In 2019, the wage threshold increased to \$12/hour for employers with 26 or more employees or \$24/hour for an annual salary of \$49,920.
  - ✓ In 2020, the minimum wage will increase to \$26/hour for exempt employees for an annual salary of \$54,080.
  - ✓ In 2021, the minimum wage will increase to \$28/hour for exempt employees for an annual salary of \$58,240 until 2022 (and 2023) when it will be \$30/hour.
  - ✓ In 2024, the minimum wage will increase annually by the lesser of 3.5% or the change in the federal Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- **FFA Social Workers are Required by Law to Have a Master’s Degree:** FFA Social Workers are required by law to have a Master’s degree in social work or social welfare; marriage, family, and child counseling; child psychology; child development; counseling psychology, educational psychology; clinical psychology or social psychology (*Health and Safety Code Sections 1506*). In addition, an FFA Social Worker Supervisor must have a

Master's degree in one of those disciplines plus a combination of field and work experience including at least two years of full-time social work or casework employment in a licensed FFA or adoption agency or three years of full-time social work or casework employment in the field of family or child welfare services.

- **Current Average Salary for a Master's Level FFA Social Worker is \$47,304:** The current FFA rate schedule supports an average salary of \$47,304 for FFA Social Workers. In 2019, however, FFA Social Workers must receive a minimum annual salary of \$49,920. Compare the salaries of FFA Social Workers to the most recent data by the California Employment Development Department (EDD) Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey:
  - ✓ FFA Social Workers make an average of \$22.74/hour for an annual salary of \$47,304.
  - ✓ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers make an average of \$27.21/hour for an annual salary of \$56,592.
  - ✓ Child, Family and School Social Workers make an average of \$27.26/hour for an annual salary of \$56,694.
  - ✓ Healthcare Social Workers make an average of \$35.53/hour for an annual salary of \$73,896.
  
- **The Effects of Losing a Social Worker to Kids and Families:** Qualified social workers are leaving FFAs at an alarming rate and this exodus is having the greatest negative impact to the child because when the trust is broken and the child is re-traumatized – they experience another loss and sense of abandonment.
  - ✓ The number ONE complaint from FFA Resource Parents is social worker turnover. The loss of continuity with their social worker frustrates both the foster parent and the youth because they have to start all over with a new social worker getting to know each other and understanding the family dynamics and behavioral issues.
  - ✓ Every time a social worker leaves, the child is re-traumatized over loss and abandonment. Trust is broken every time. Permanency plans are stalled and sometimes disrupted forever.
  - ✓ Social work staff are the core support link between the foster family, youth, bio family, siblings and relatives. When you can't support the Resource Family, they get frustrated, give up hope and will exit the foster care system.
  
- **83% of Social Workers are Female:** According to the 2018 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 83% of social workers are female.

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