



Living Wage NYC

Our City. Our Lives. Our Future.

Why We Need a Living Wage

“I worked as a stock clerk at the J.C. Penney store in the Queens Center Mall in Elmhurst. I made sure customers had a pleasant shopping experience, and, in turn, they continued to shop in Queens. I enjoyed the work I did, and my work as a retailer benefited the local economy. Still, I only made \$8.35 an hour, and it has always been a struggle to support my family. Earning \$10 an hour would benefit me and my family so that we could always pay our bills and rent on time, and maybe we could even have some quality time to spend together. If passed, the Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act would benefit my family, my community, and our local economy.”

- Marvin Hernandez, Stock Clerk at J.C. Penney’s

“We don’t work for nothing, we work for a living. I work as an adjunct teacher with no benefits, and it is always tough making ends meet. I am concerned that the city’s infrastructure is falling apart. Schools are underfunded and overpopulated, and many times folks have to sell drugs and worry about going to jail. Yet the city is handing away money to those who need it the least. If the city spent more money on creating good jobs with benefits, we wouldn’t have to spend so much on prisons and cops. The infrastructure as a whole would improve, and in turn, the city would be a much safer place.”

- Adán Stevens-Díaz, Adjunct Teacher

“I make less than \$10 an hour, which is too little to support myself, yet my income is too high for me to qualify for food stamps, Medicaid or housing assistance. I am always feeling stress from not being able to make ends meet. At the very least, I need to earn a living wage with benefits just to be able to survive. I pay my taxes and I deserve something in return.”

- Geraldine Bunai, Sales Associate at Daffy’s

“There is no way I can chase my dreams while making minimum wages. I would like to be financially independent and eventually go back to school, but right now I am stuck. My entire family depends on me—I have to support my mother and six brothers and sisters. If everybody earned more, we wouldn’t be as frustrated, and life would be a lot smoother. The Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act would drastically improve life for all of us.”

- Ahmed, Former worker at Shoe Mania