

**TITLE 4: ECONOMIC RESOURCES**  
**DIVISION 9: LABOR**

**§ 9221. Minimum Wages.**

(a) Every employer, other than a garment or construction business, and except as the secretary may provide under 4 CMC § 9234, shall pay to each employee employed by him or her, a minimum wage as follows:

- (1) Beginning January 1, 1995, at the rate of \$2.75 per hour;
- (2) Beginning July 1, 1996, at the rate of \$3.05 per hour.

(b) Every employer who qualifies as a garment or construction business, except as the secretary may provide under 4 CMC § 9234, shall pay to each employee employed by him or her, a minimum wage as follows:

- (1) Beginning January 1, 1995, at the rate of \$2.75 per hour;
- (2) Beginning July 1, 1996, at the rate of \$2.90 per hour;
- (3) Beginning July 1, 1997, at the rate of \$3.05 per hour.

**Source:** PL 1-20, § 3; amended by PL 3-16, § 2; PL 8-21, § 4; PL 9-73, § 5; PL 10-13, § 1.

**Commission Comment:** Pursuant to Covenant § 503, the Commonwealth is exempt from federal minimum wage laws “except in the manner and to the extent made applicable . . . by the [U.S.] Congress by law after termination of the Trusteeship Agreement.” As of mid-1997, Congress has not made federal minimum wage laws applicable in the Commonwealth.

The minimum wage in the Commonwealth (under local law) has increased as follows: under PL 1-20, § 3 (effective January 12, 1979): \$1.35 per hour; under PL 3-16, § 2: \$1.75 per hour (effective June 23, 1982), \$1.95 per hour (effective October 1, 1983), and \$2.15 per hour (effective October 1, 1984); under PL 8-21, § 4: \$2.45 per hour (effective January 1, 1993), \$2.75 per hour (effective January 1, 1994), \$3.05 per hour (effective January 1, 1995), \$3.35 per hour (effective January 1, 1996), \$3.65 per hour (effective January 1, 1997), \$3.95 per hour (effective January 1, 1998), and \$4.25 per hour (effective January 1, 1999); under PL 9-73, § 5 (effective December 30, 1995), the 1996 increase to \$3.35 per hour specified under PL 8-21 was postponed to July 1, 1996; and under PL 10-13, § 1 (which was signed into law June 15, 1996), the current provisions of 4 CMC § 9221 were enacted, with the effective dates specified. PL 10-13 deleted the minimum wage increases PL 8-21 specified for 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999.

With respect to the references to the “secretary” of the Department of Labor and Immigration, see Executive Order 94-3 (effective August 23, 1994), reorganizing the executive branch, changing agency names and official titles, and effecting other changes, set forth in the Commission comment to 1 CMC § 2001; see also the comment to 4 CMC § 9212.