

Thousands to get raise when minimum wage rises Jan. 1



Portland City Hall in September 2017. Roughly 7,200 tipped and non-tipped workers in the city will see wages increase directly. (BEN MCCANNA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

A 3.1% BUMP

Statewide, the base hourly rate will go from \$14.65 to \$15.10 for non-tipped workers on Thursday. It's \$7.55 per hour for those earning tips.

By DANIEL KOOL
Staff Writer

Minimum wages are set to rise throughout the state come New Year's Day — including in Portland, where the floor will rise more than 8%. Statewide, the minimum hourly rate will go from \$14.65 to \$15.10 — up about 3.1% — for non-tipped workers. For those earning tips, the minimum will rise to \$7.55 per hour. The state's minimum wage is pegged to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' cost-of-living index for the Northeast, hence the 3.1% bump from last year.

"THERE'S A LOT OF DEBATE about the magnitude ... but there's going to be some negative effects, for sure."

DAN STONE
chair, Bowdoin College
economics department

In November, nearly two-thirds of Portland voters opted to increase the city's minimum wage to \$19 by 2028 through a series of incremental hikes. The first bump, slated for Thursday, will bring Portland's non-

tipped minimum wage from \$15.50 to \$16.75, an 8.1% increase. For workers who regularly receive more than \$191 in tips each month, the minimum wage will be \$8.38 per hour in 2026. If those workers' tips and base wages total less than \$16.75 per hour combined, their employers must make up the difference. Roughly 7,200 tipped and non-tipped workers in Portland will see their wages increase as a direct result of the new 2026 minimum, according to James Myall, an analyst

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TODAY'S
ALMANAC

December 31, 2025

Today is the 365th and final day of 2025. This is New Year's Eve.
Today in history:
On Dec. 31, 1879, Thomas Edison first demonstrated his electric incandescent lights for the public by illuminating some 100 bulbs in and around his laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey.
Also on this date:
In 1904, New York's Times Square saw its first New Year's Eve celebration, with an estimated 200,000 people in attendance.
In 1972, baseball player Roberto Clemente, 38, was killed when a plane he chartered and was traveling on crashed shortly after takeoff from Puerto Rico while carrying relief supplies for earthquake-devastated Nicaragua.
In 1985, singer Rick Nelson, 45, and six others were killed when fire broke out aboard a plane that was taking the group to a New Year's Eve performance in Dallas.
In 1995, the syndicated comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes," created by Bill Watterson, came to an end after a 10-year run.

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Liam Hobbins, of Saco, navigates an icy trail through Ferry Beach State Park in Saco with his sure-footed companions, Summit, left, and Everest, on Tuesday. (SHAWN PATRICK OUELLETTE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

First-day hikers aim high to get 2026 off on the right foot

Several ambitious Mainers share their tips for treks on New Year's Day, when admission to state parks is free.

By MEGAN GRAY
Staff Writer

On New Year's Eve, Ilse Dunbar will be in bed well before midnight. That's because she'll be up at 4:30 a.m. on New Year's Day to hit the trail. "I would never skip Jan. 1 as a hiking day," the Rumford resident said. "Because that sets the stage for the year." And Dunbar has a big year ahead. She's 28 peaks shy of completing what's known in the White Mountains

of New Hampshire as "a grid," which can take years to achieve. When she's done, she will have hiked all 48 of the 4,000-footers at some point in all 12 months. That's 576 peaks summited in total. "I'm going to finish it," she said. "There's no doubt." Many Mainers ring in the New Year by getting outside. Across the country, state parks, including those in Maine, offer free events to encourage people



Ilse Dunbar, of Rumford, on her way down Mt. Lafayette in New Hampshire. She has big goals in the new year. (COURTESY OF ILSE DUNBAR)

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Thieves in Massachusetts get claws into \$400,000 shipment of lobster

The sophisticated Dec. 12 heist from a cold-storage facility in Taunton, Mass., is the latest in a string of high-value cargo thefts plaguing the transport industry. 'This ... wasn't random.'

By PENELOPE OVERTON
Staff Writer

Thieves used a fake commercial driver's license, spoofed emails and forged papers to steal a truckload of lobster meat worth \$400,000 from a Massachusetts warehouse just a few days before Christmas. The Dec. 12 heist from Lineage Logistics, a cold-storage facility in Taunton, is the latest in a string of high-value cargo thefts plaguing the transport industry, according to Dylan Rexing, head of the Indiana company that was hired to transport the now-missing lobster. "This theft wasn't random," Rexing

said. "It followed a pattern we're seeing more and more, where criminals impersonate legitimate carriers using spoofed emails and burner phones to hijack high-value freight while it's in transit." As a freight broker, Rexing Companies thought it was hiring a legitimate truck driver from a reputable third-party carrier with a high safety rating to haul the lobster shipment to Costco warehouses in Illinois and Minnesota, Rexing said.



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Judge blocks attempt to defund agency for consumer protection

The decision, coming just days before the CFPB would have run out of money, ensures employees will get paid.

By KEN SWEET
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The White House cannot lapse in its funding of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a federal district court judge ruled on Tuesday, only days before funds at the bureau would have likely run out and the consumer finance agency would have no money to pay its employees. Judge Amy Berman ruled that the CFPB should continue to get its funds from the Federal Reserve, despite the Fed operating at a loss, and that the White House's new legal argument about how the CFPB gets its

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