

# NATIONAL LIVING AND MINIMUM WAGE ARE SET TO INCREASE CHANGES FROM 1 APRIL 2026

The minimum wage will increase on 1 April 2026, providing a notable uplift for younger workers and apprentices. Employees stand to benefit, but the extra cost may be difficult for many employers to absorb, particularly in hospitality.

## WAGE INCREASES

Following high increases in April 2024 and April 2025, the minimum wage rate for employees aged 21 and over has increased 22% since 2024. Current and future rates from 1 April 2026 are:

Age	Current rate	From 1 April 2026	Percentage increase
National Living Wage (NLW) 21 and over	£12.21	£12.71	4.1%
National Minimum Wage (NMW) 18 to 20	£10.00	£10.85	8.5%
NMW Apprentices and those under 18	£7.55	£8.00	6.0%

Apprentices over 19 who have completed the first year of their apprenticeship are entitled to the rate for their age.

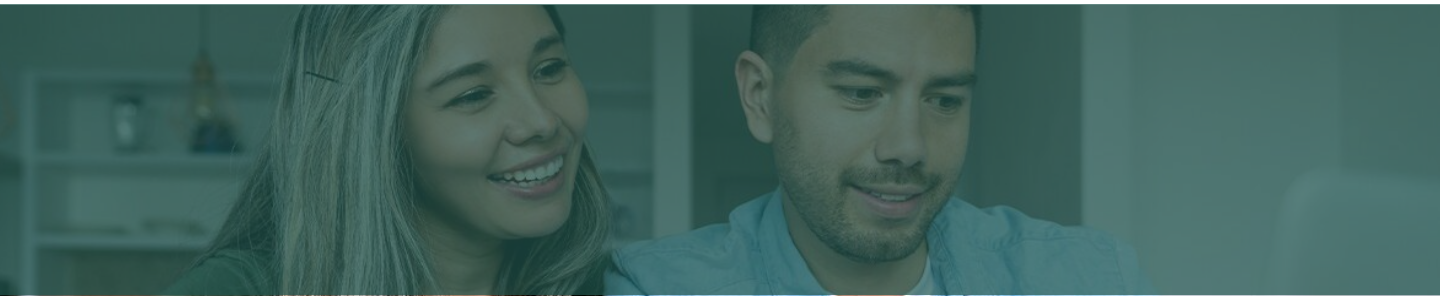
The new rates will have a significant effect on take-home pay. From April 2026, a full-time worker aged 21 and over will see their annual gross pay increase by around £1,000. The annual increase is more than £1,600 for someone aged 18 to 20.

When making their recommendations, the Low Pay Commission took into account stronger-than-expected wage growth, which was 4.6% annually up to September 2025.

## MITIGATING THE EFFECTS

Forward planning is key to managing the minimum wage rate increases. For example:

- Review staffing and working patterns, while introducing more flexible working arrangements.
- Consider automating tasks. Where this is not possible, then investment in staff training will hopefully improve productivity and efficiency. With training, staff should be able to cover a wider range of roles, making the workforce more adaptable during busy periods.
- Even small changes, such as updating the way in which stock is controlled, can soon add up to a meaningful time saving.



If price increases are become necessary, these should be clearly communicated as early as possible to customers.

The rates of National Minimum/Living Wage can be found [here](#).

### WE CAN HELP

If you require further information, please contact us on 01753 888 211 or email [info@nhllp.com](mailto:info@nhllp.com). We are here to help.