



Alternatives North

MEDIA RELEASE

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Living Wage Released for Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik

Alternatives North has released an updated calculation of the living wage required by families in Yellowknife, and the first-ever calculations of living wages for Hay River and Inuvik.

In order to earn a wage that allows for a decent standard of living, each parent in a family of four would have to earn \$23.95 in Yellowknife, \$24.75 in Hay River and \$23.78 in Inuvik working 37.5 hours per week.

The living wage is calculated for a family of four, including two working parents, one child in full time child care, and one child in elementary school. Since two-thirds of Inuvik's population is Indigenous, that living wage is calculated for Indigenous persons who are eligible for programs non-Indigenous families cannot access.

The calculations use the methodology of the Canadian Living Wage Framework. The bare-bones budget includes shelter, food, clothing, transportation, child care, health care services and supplies, and a small emergency fund. The budget does not include paying debts, saving money, helping other family members financially or owning a pet, among other things.

"Living Wage rates show what it takes to live decently in the NWT. To ensure this basic standard of living, we can either raise wages, decrease costs or increase subsidies." says Alternatives North's Suzette Montreuil, who led recalculation efforts. "Either way, we have to do something to help lower income working residents."

Michel Haener, an Alberta-based economist calculated the living wage rates. She has calculated living wages for other communities including Grande Prairie, Red Deer and Canmore. The nationally-recognized Canadian Living Wage Framework provides a methodology that allows living wage rates to be compared among communities.

See the attached report and living wage infographic.

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