



**United Way**  
**Peterborough & District**  
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## United Way Releases the 2022 Living Wage Report titled 'The Gap'

**PETERBOROUGH, ON (November 14, 2022)** – In recognition of Living Wage Week that is taking place internationally from November 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, the **United Way of Peterborough & District released its 2022 Living Wage Report**. Titled 'The Gap', this year's report highlights the growing difference between increasing cost of living and various forms of income that have stayed relatively stagnant for years. The living wage is what a full-time worker needs to earn, per hour, in order to make ends meet where they live.

Our local **living wage committee**, which includes Nancy Fischer, Paul Armstrong, Dawn Berry Merriam, Betsy Farrar, and Jim Russell, **researched local expenses** associated with basic necessities for individuals in our community. The cost of shelter, transportation, childcare, food, and internet are examples of some of the expenses including in the calculation. "The living wage rate is calculated based on modest expenses for someone living in Peterborough. It is important to note that **the calculation does not include expenses beyond the necessities of daily living** such as paying off past debts or saving for future expenses like retirement, home ownership, or a child's education," explained **Betsy Farrar, Manager of Community Impact** at United Way Peterborough & District.

This year's living wage rates were based on an **aggregation of the expenses for three different family structures** – a single adult with no dependents, a single adult with one child, and two adults with two children. For the first time since its inception, the Ontario Living Wage Network is able to provide a living wage rate for the entire province through the use of ten economic regions. Our local living wage committee, alongside other communities throughout the province, researched local expenses on behalf of the Ontario Living Wage Network who then averaged the calculations for each of the ten regions. Locally, **our living wage falls within the eastern region**.

The 2022 living wage for the eastern region is **\$19.05 per hour**, based on 35 hours of work per week for 50 weeks of the year.

**Jim Russell, CEO** of United Way Peterborough & District emphasized that the living wage calculation highlights considerable **shortcomings between other forms of income**, such as a minimum wage and social assistance programs, and the cost of living in today's economy. "The increases we are seeing to our living wage year over year reflect the **rising costs of absolute essentials** like food and housing. Meanwhile, the growing gap between a living wage and a minimum wage, or government benefits programs, are a stark indication that **those earning less than a living wage are not able to make ends meet**. The rising cost of living are impacting the lowest income earners



the most as government-mandated **incomes are not keeping pace with inflation**,” said Russell.

The report illustrates the **gap between monthly expenses and the incomes** for those earning a minimum wage, Ontario Disability Support Program, and Ontario Works. The calculations demonstrate that single adults earning:

- A minimum wage are making 82% of a living wage, and are \$423.92 short of covering basic monthly expenses
- The maximum benefit available for Ontario Disability Support Program are making 44% of a living wage, and are \$1,365.92 short of covering basic monthly expenses
- The maximum benefit available through Ontario Works are making 26.5% of a living wage, and are \$1,860.92 short of covering basic monthly expenses

Earning less than a living wage jeopardizes individuals’ and families’ abilities to cover basic necessities like food and shelter. **Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and CEO of Peterborough Public Health**, shared his reactions to the gap between the cost of living and various income types from a health perspective. “As an integral **social determinant of health**, income plays a significant role in the health of individuals and our community. Individuals and families earning low incomes are faced with decisions between spending their limited income on **basic human necessities** like food or housing, forcing people to rely on services like food banks or give up some expenses entirely. Inadequate access to nutritious food and safe housing is a huge detriment to one’s health physically, mentally, and socially,” explained Dr. Piggott.

The 2022 Living Wage Report, ‘The Gap’, can be found online by scanning the QR code or visiting the address below:



[https://www.uwpeterborough.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Living\\_Wage\\_V3\\_Online.pdf](https://www.uwpeterborough.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Living_Wage_V3_Online.pdf)

Printed copies of the report are available from the United Way Peterborough & District office.

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