

Alberta
Low Wage Profile
April 2017 – March 2018



Introduction

This *Alberta Low Wage Profile* presents current information on low wage earners which are persons whose average hourly earnings¹ are below \$15 in Alberta and other provinces. Statistics include the percentage of employees² earning below \$15 per hour in each province plus the characteristics for those persons in Alberta.

The profile is based on two reference periods: April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 and April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018.

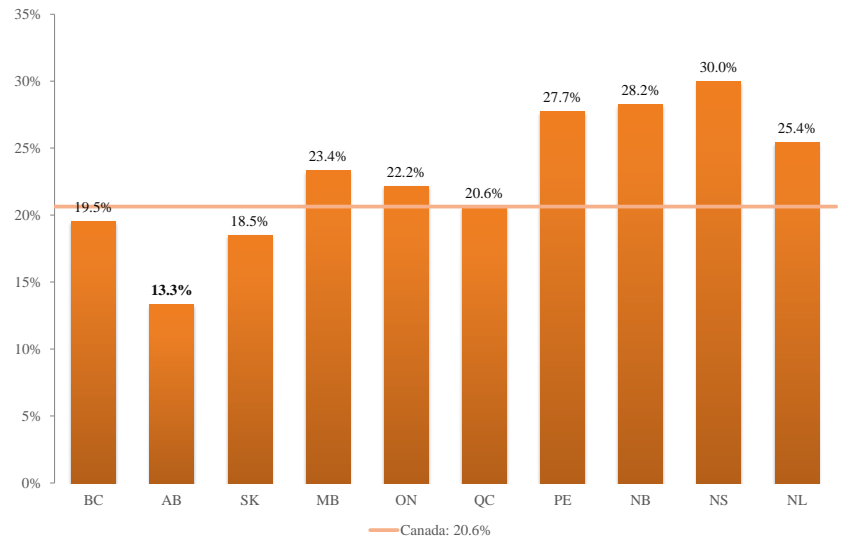
Interprovincial Analysis

The number of employees earning below \$15 per hour in Alberta decreased over the two reference periods from 292,400 to 253,900. Alberta had the lowest percentage of low wage earners among the Canadian provinces, followed by Saskatchewan. For Canada, the proportion decreased between the two periods to 20.6% from 22.6% (Table 1, Figure 1).

Table 1: Percentage of Employees Earning Low Wage

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Alberta	292,400	15.5%	253,900	13.3%
Canada	3,484,300	22.6%	3,230,500	20.6%

Figure 1: Percentage of Employees Earning Low Wage by Province



¹ See definition (Average hourly earnings) in Appendix A

² See definition (Employees) in Appendix A

Alberta Analysis

At 23.9%, the 15 to 19 year old group remained the largest group of low wage earners in Alberta, and the 20 to 24 year old group was the second largest in the April 2017 to March 2018 period (Table 2).

The proportion of low wage earners increased for the following age groups in the April 2017 – March 2018 period compared to the April 2016 – March 2017 period:

20 to 24 years, up 1.6 percentage points;
30 to 34 years, up 0.9 percentage points;
35 to 39 years, up 0.1 percentage points;
45 to 49 years, up 0.7 percentage points; and
55 years and over, up 1.7 percentage points.

There were proportionately fewer low wage earners in all other age groups in the current reference period compared to the previous period (Table 2).

Just over half, or 52.7%, of low wage earners worked full-time between April 2017 and March 2018 (Table 3).

As in the previous reference period, a larger proportion, or 76.4% of low wage earners were in permanent employment (Table 4).

During the current reference period, 37.2% of low wage earners had children of which 12.2% were single earner families with children (Table 5).

Table 2: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Age (years)

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
15-19	76,500	26.2%	60,700	23.9%
20-24	59,800	20.4%	56,000	22.0%
25-29	31,300	10.7%	25,600	10.1%
30-34	24,500	8.4%	23,500	9.3%
35-39	19,000	6.5%	16,700	6.6%
40-44	21,500	7.3%	14,800	5.8%
45-49	14,800	5.1%	14,700	5.8%
50-54	14,000	4.8%	10,800	4.2%
55+	31,100	10.6%	31,200	12.3%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 3: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Type of Work

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Full-Time	149,400	51.1%	133,700	52.7%
Part-Time	143,100	48.9%	120,200	47.3%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 4: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Job Permanence

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Permanent	231,000	79.0%	194,100	76.4%
Temporary*	61,400	21.0%	59,800	23.6%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

*includes seasonal, temporary, and casual employees.

Table 5: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Family Type

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Married, Dual earners with Children	74,400	25.4%	63,400	25.0%
Married, Dual earners no children	63,500	21.7%	62,800	24.7%
Married, Single earner no children	22,700	7.8%	19,100	7.5%
Married, Single earner with children	22,500	7.7%	16,700	6.6%
Other	52,100	17.8%	39,000	15.4%
Single Parent with children	18,200	6.2%	14,300	5.6%
Unattached individual	39,100	13.4%	38,600	15.2%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Note: Children are only considered if under 18

Of all low wage earners, 39.6% had less than one year of job tenure in the April 2017 – March 2018 reference period. The proportion that had one to five years of job tenure was 45.4%, which was lower than the 48.1% in the previous reference period. Overall, the proportion of low wage earners who had job tenure of five years or less decreased from 87.3% in the previous period to 85.0% in the current reference period (Table 6).

Between April 2017 and March 2018, less than one quarter or 22.6% of Alberta low wage earners were students (Table 7).

Of all Alberta low wage earners over the April 2017 to March 2018 period, 19.1% had some high school as their highest level of education and 32.0% had high school diplomas as their highest level of education. The proportion with less than high school was lower in the current period, at 21.5%, compared to the previous period, at 22.8% (Table 8).

Females made up 63.3% of the low wage earners in Alberta in the current reference period, which is higher than the 59.6% in the previous period. The proportion of male low wage earners from April 2017 to March 2018 was 36.7% (Table 9).

During the current reference period, 36.3% of low wage earners were living with their parents. Another 9.3% were the main income earner in their household and had children under 18 (Table 10).

Table 6: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Job Tenure

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Less than One Year	114,600	39.2%	100,500	39.6%
One to Five Years	140,500	48.1%	115,300	45.4%
More than Five Years	37,200	12.7%	38,100	15.0%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 7: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Student Status

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Student	73,300	24.7%	57,400	22.6%
Non-Student	222,900	75.3%	196,500	77.4%
Total	296,200	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 8: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Highest Educational Attainment

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
0-8 Years (Elementary)	4,800	1.6%	6,200	2.4%
Some High School	62,000	21.2%	48,500	19.1%
High School Graduate	89,000	30.4%	81,200	32.0%
Some Post-Secondary	30,300	10.4%	25,800	10.2%
Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	62,700	21.4%	51,500	20.3%
University Degree	43,700	15.0%	40,600	16.0%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 9: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Sex

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Female	174,200	59.6%	160,800	63.3%
Male	118,200	40.4%	93,100	36.7%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 10: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Position in Household

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Head of house hold	110,200	37.2%	92,600	36.5%
With Children	26,200	8.8%	23,700	9.3%
No Children	84,000	28.4%	68,900	27.1%
Other	20,000	6.8%	16,000	6.3%
Parent (or parent-in-law)	7,800	2.6%	5,800	2.3%
Son or daughter (or Son or daughter-in-law)	108,300	36.6%	92,100	36.3%
Spouse	49,800	16.8%	47,500	18.7%
Total	296,200	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Between April 2017 and March 2018, more than half, or 61.0%, of Alberta's low wage earners were employed in two industries: Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services (Table 11).

Between April 2017 and March 2018, more than half of Alberta low wage earners worked in the following three occupational groups: Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c.³, 20.3%; Sales support occupations, 15.6%; and Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations, 14.2% (Table 12).

Table 11: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Industry

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Accommodation and Food Services	78,100	26.7%	71,800	28.3%
Retail Trade	104,600	35.8%	83,100	32.7%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	19,100	6.5%	15,300	6.0%
Information, Culture and Recreation	17,100	5.9%	14,100	5.6%
Educational Services	11,800	4.0%	10,500	4.1%
All Other Industries	61,700	21.1%	59,000	23.2%
Total	292,400	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

Table 12: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Occupation

	April 2016 - March 2017		April 2017 - March 2018	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c. ³	55,300	18.7%	51,500	20.3%
Sales support occupations	52,200	17.6%	39,700	15.6%
Sales representatives and salespersons - wholesale and retail trade	35,800	12.1%	36,000	14.2%
Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	26,200	8.8%	29,400	11.6%
Service supervisors and specialized service occupations	29,500	10.0%	21,100	8.3%
Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations	7,700	2.6%	5,400	2.1%
Professional occupations in education services and; Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	11,200	3.8%	10,700	4.2%
Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production and; Transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations	10,000	3.4%	7,000	2.8%
Other occupations	68,200	23.0%	53,100	20.9%
Total	296,200	100.0%	253,900	100.0%

³ Not elsewhere classified

Appendix A

Methodology

The data for this profile are gathered from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted by Statistics Canada. Each month, the Labour Economics and Statistics Unit of Alberta Labour receives LFS files from Statistics Canada. This includes a microdata file, which contains the complete file of all LFS responses.

The low wage analysis is performed on the microdata using the statistical software package SAS. The Canadian territories are excluded from this analysis. Twelve-month averages are used to ensure the results are not affected by seasonality. The microdata files for each of the twelve months examined are combined into one large data set and annual averages are then calculated. In this profile, the results are an average of the April 2017 to March 2018 numbers.

Definitions

These definitions are from Statistics Canada, except for “Employees” and the occupational and industrial groups.

Average hourly earnings

Average hourly earnings before taxes and other deductions, and include tips, commissions and bonuses. Because tips, commissions and bonuses are included, the analysis may not include all low wage earners. This variable is not exclusive to wage earners and includes employees who are salaried, work on commission and other pay schemes. Because it is just based on hourly earnings and not hourly wage the analysis may include persons who are not low wage earners.

Employees

In this analysis, people who were either self-employed or listed as having an hourly wage rate of \$0.00 were removed from the overall employment figure to determine the number of employees. Please note that the number of employees in organizations is different from the employment figure for Alberta.

Full-Time Employees

People who usually work 30 hours or more per week at their main or only job.

Industry

North American Industry Classification System – Canada 2012

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects/standard/naics/2012/index>

Part-Time Employees

People who usually work less than 30 hours per week at their main or only job.

Permanent Job

A permanent job is one that is expected to last as long as the employee wants it, given that business conditions permit. There is no pre-determined termination date.

Temporary Job

A temporary job has a predetermined end date, or will end as soon as a specified project is completed. Included in temporary jobs are seasonal, temporary, term or contract jobs; also include work done through a temporary help agency; casual jobs; and other temporary work.

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<http://work.alberta.ca/labour/labour-market-information.html>

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