

A nonprofit youth training wage for St. Paul

As leaders in the Twin Cities Nonprofit Youth Training programs, we support a thoughtful increase in the employment wage which we believe will promote economic security and an increased quality of life in our communities. We also support the certification of Youth Training Programs that provide a curriculum that includes social/emotional development, community engagement and work ready skills building. There are approximately 50 nonprofit youth programs using the “earn to learn” Youth Training model and who employ 3,000 youth per year in the Twin Cities, about half of them are in St. Paul.

We support the inclusion of a Youth Training Wage as recommended in the Citizens League Report of August 2018.

A St. Paul Nonprofit Training Wage for 180 days at 85% of the Prevailing Wage

- For youth in St. Paul certified nonprofit **training** programs, we support a distinctive youth training wage. Nonprofit youth training programs commonly serve youth ages 14-24, and focus a significant portion of their paid time using an evidence-based “earn and learn” model. This model integrates work readiness, social-emotional skills, community engagement, and career mentoring. This model works well with youth who are from low-income neighborhoods and who face multiple barriers to employment.
- Other municipal sources of revenue must be developed to support a pipeline of talent needed by local industry. Nonprofit “earn and learn” programs will, on average, see a 40% increase in youth wage costs by 2020. The unintended consequences of these significant cost increases will be a reduction in the number of low-income youth served.
- The Minneapolis Ordinance that provides for a 90-day training wage for youth training programs at 85% of the prevailing wage is insufficient for long-term training programs. It does not recognize the developmental needs or environmental factors of teens employed in these non-profit youth training programs. St Paul is looking at 180-days and we support that.

It should be noted that youth who are hired as managers or youth workers are paid the prevailing wage.

These recommendations are from the Citizens League Report of August 2018 (page 23-24) as summarized below:

- *Youth training programs:* The majority of the Study Committee recognizes the unique role of youth training programs in developing soft and technical skills for Saint Paul's future workforce. This exemption would be applicable only to participants in City-approved youth-training programs with a focus on nurturing soft skills, social and emotional job skills, and building career competence, mirroring language in the City of Minneapolis' minimum wage ordinance. Intent of this exemption does not extend to all "youth wages"—that is, youth workers employed in a peer capacity with adult workers, where there is little or no difference in work responsibilities, should be paid at the full minimum wage rate. For example, youth training wages would apply while a 16-year-old participates in a City-approved program for youth development, but they would not apply if the same 16-year-old worked in a commercial retail setting with the same work duties and responsibilities as an adult worker.

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