

Key Region 7W Findings and Analysis*
From JOBS NOW's Updated *Cost of Living in Minnesota* Research**

- The average annual cost of meeting basic needs for a family of four with two workers is about \$59,800. To cover these costs each worker must earn \$14.08 per hour.
- **Forty-six percent of jobs in Region 7W—almost 74,000 jobs—pay less than a family-supporting wage of \$14.08 per hour.*****
- At the minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, a couple with two children would have to work 155 hours a week to meet basic needs.
- If one parent stays home with the children in a family of four, the other must find a job that pays \$18.84 per hour to cover basic needs. Sixty-five percent of jobs in Region 7W pay less.
- If the purchasing power of the minimum wage had kept pace with inflation since the late 1960s, it would be \$9.95 per hour. **In Central Minnesota, 23 percent of jobs—almost 37,000 jobs—pay less than \$9.95 per hour.******
- A single person with no dependents must earn \$12.51 per hour to meet basic needs. Thirty-nine percent of jobs in Region 7W pay less.
- The annual cost of basic needs for a single person with one child is about \$38,600—more than \$24,000 higher than the federal poverty line. To cover these costs a person must earn \$18.58 per hour.

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* Economic Region 7W consists of the following Central Minnesota counties: Benton, Sherburne, Stearns and Wright.

** For a PDF version of the 2009 *Cost of Living in Minnesota* report, go to www.jobsnowcoalition.org.

*** Wage data were compiled by the Labor Market Information Office of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the second quarter of 2009.

**** At \$7.25 per hour, the minimum wage has lost more than a quarter of its purchasing power since 1968, when it was \$1.60 per hour. If it had kept pace with inflation, it would be \$9.95 per hour in 2009 dollars. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator is on the following web site: <http://www.bls.gov/bls/inflation.htm>