

## Supervisors Approve Living Wage Increase

In-home care workers, others get COLA boost to estimated \$13.30 per hour

San Rafael, CA – Marin County will remain No. 1 statewide for the hourly wage it pays in-home supportive services workers now that the Board of Supervisors has unanimously approved a cost-of-living increase to an estimated \$13.30 per hour for those not receiving benefits.

On Tuesday, November 10, the Board approved an estimated 2.5 percent increase effective January 1, 2016, for in-home care workers who assist seniors and people with disabilities – up to an estimated \$13.30 per hour for those not receive benefits and up to an estimated \$11.70 for those who do. The rates are tied to the regional Consumer Price Index update, which won't be known until mid-November.

In addition to about 1,600 in-home care workers affected, about 80 County employees working as library aides, library technology aides, service workers and performance attendants are in line to receive the same living wage increase. The pay boosts follow a similar increase approved by the Board one year ago.

The change's total fiscal impact to the County of Marin government would be about \$206,000 for the balance of the current fiscal year and annual estimated costs of \$412,000 in subsequent years.

The Board has routinely expressed a desire to keep pace with the regional Consumer Price Index with the goal of providing a more sustainable wage for workers in Marin. Marin's pay rate for in-home supportive services workers is the best in California; Santa Clara County is anticipating a cost-of-living adjustment to result in a \$13 rate in February 2016.

While the majority of IHSS workers in California only receive minimum wage set by the state, the County made the choice to include IHSS providers in its living wage ordinance. The policy goal is to increase the minimum hourly wage to a level more sufficient for workers to meet the basic needs of their families.

A living wage typically requires a higher minimum wage for employees who provide direct services if their employer contracts with the County in excess of \$25,000 in a fiscal year. As a general law county, Marin does not have the legal authority to adjust the minimum wage as do the state government or charter cities and counties.

The In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority of Marin (IHSS PA), established in 2002 by the Board of Supervisors, is considered the "employer of record" for in-home care providers and is responsible for negotiating wages and benefits for IHSS providers. The IHSS program serves low-income older adults and people with disabilities who qualify for in-home care to remain independent and safe in their own homes.