

## The real living wage

The real living wage is an hourly rate of pay set by the [Living Wage Foundation](#). It is calculated based on the cost of living.

The real living wage is voluntary. This means employers can choose to pay it instead of the National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage. HMRC does not enforce the real living wage.

The real living wage rates are usually announced in autumn. Employers have to implement them by May the following year.

[Check the real living wage rates on the Living Wage Foundation](#)