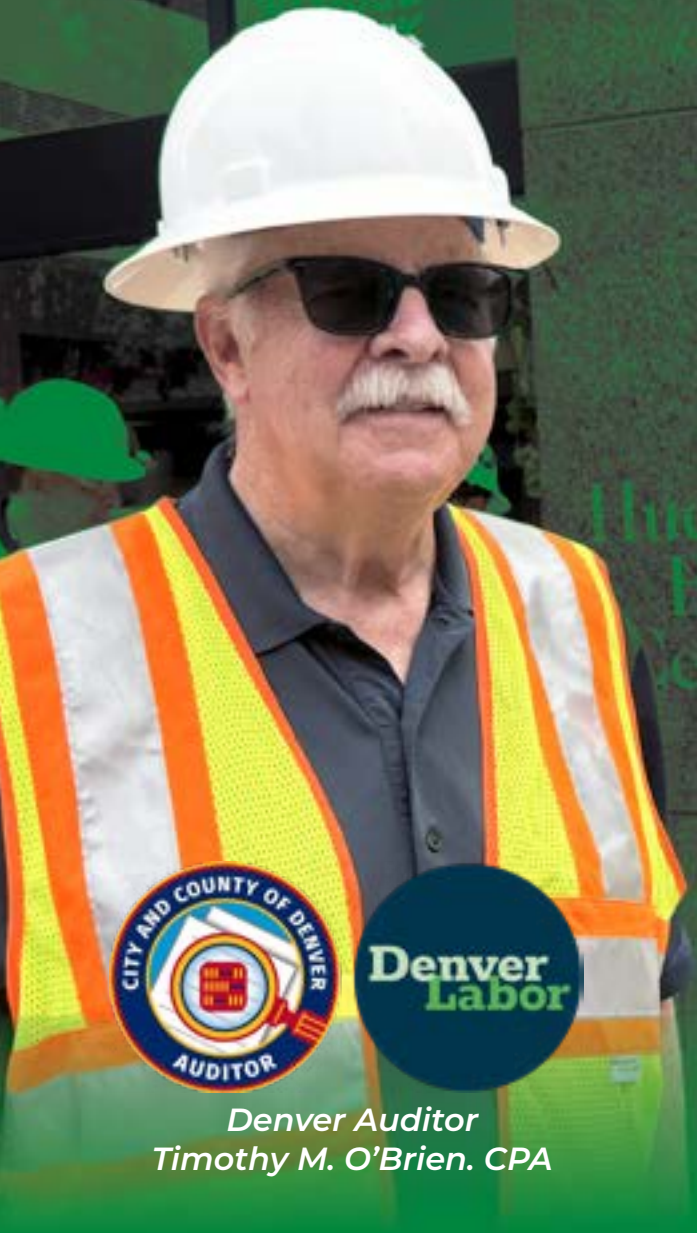
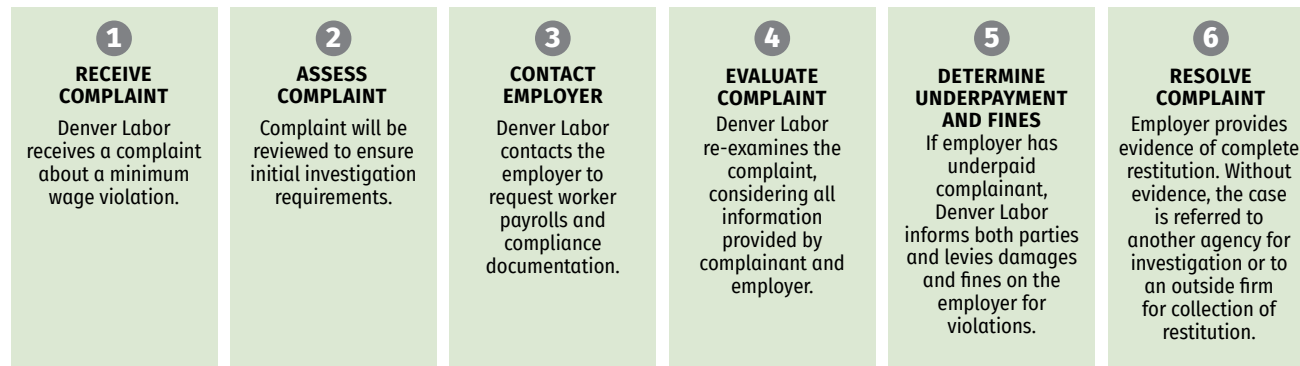


# Citywide Wage Resources for Employers

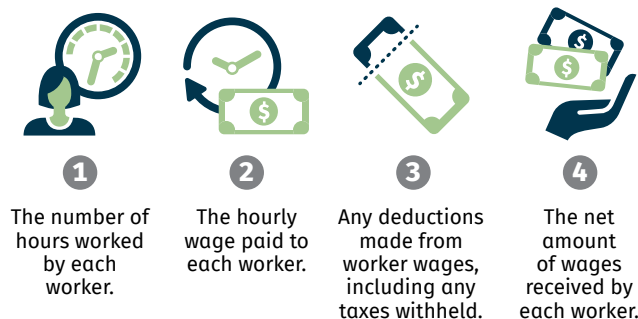


Denver Auditor  
Timothy M. O'Brien, CPA

## Six steps of a minimum wage investigation



## Payroll records must include at least:



## Determine underpayment, violations and fines

### COMPLAINT UNSUPPORTED



- Analyst will inform both the complainant and the employer no underpayment or violation was found.
- Case will be closed.
- A determination does not bar any party from seeking alternative relief or prevent a party from resubmitting a complaint with additional information.
- A party has 30 days from the notice of a determination to file a written appeal with the Auditor's Office.

### COMPLAINT SUPPORTED



- Analyst will inform both the complainant and the employer of any restitution owed and the assessment of any applicable fines.
- The employer can be fined or assessed damages for underpaying workers, failing to produce records, and providing false records.
- Most of the fines are mandatory and cannot be waived by Denver Labor.
- A party has 30 days from the notice of a determination to file a written appeal with the Auditor's Office.

Our office may take an active enforcement approach to launch investigations. This could include onsite visits to speak with at-risk workers.

## Criteria that could trigger a proactive investigation:

- Prior violations by an owner.
- A pattern of noncompliance within an industry.
- Credible information from a state or federal agency.
- Data indicating an employer is likely to be in violation of the minimum wage.

See our website for more information, including a tips tracking tool and our Denver address finder.

[DenverGov.org/DenverLabor](https://denvergov.org/DenverLabor)

## What is Denver's Local Minimum Wage?

- \$18.81 in 2025.
- \$15.79 tipped minimum wage.
- Food and beverage industry employers may claim up to \$3.02 tip credit per hour, provided they have documentation showing workers received at least that amount in actual tips for every hour they worked.
- Minimum wage adjusts every year on January 1 based on the consumer price index. The city's Department of Finance performs that calculation, as required by ordinance.

## When do Denver's Wage Laws Apply?

- Denver's minimum wage and civil wage theft protections apply to all workers performing work within the geographical boundaries of the City and County of Denver.
- Every worker has the right to be paid the wages they've earned and are entitled to. These could include, for example, the minimum wage, overtime, paid sick time, money for all of the time a person spends working, and the wages a person is promised.
- Wage determinations are made based on where the work is performed, not based on where the business's offices might be located.

## Up-The-Chain Accountability

- "Up-the-chain accountability" means that any employer who ultimately benefits from a worker's labor may be required to pay their wages and any applicable damages or penalties for wage theft.
- Civil wage theft is one of the most common legal violations in the country. Researchers estimate that it affects millions of people every year and costs tens of billions of dollars.

### Wage rates timeline

In dollars per hour

	JAN. 1	JAN. 1	JAN. 1	JAN. 1	JAN. 1
	2023	2024	2025	2026	
<b>Denver Citywide Minimum Wage</b>	\$17.29	\$18.29	\$18.81	\$18.81 plus Consumer Price Index	
<b>Prevailing Wage</b>	A series of wages based on job classification. Independently set by a prevailing wage administrator.				

### Employer requirements

Denver law requires employers conducting business in Denver to retain records demonstrating compliance with Denver's minimum wage and civil wage theft laws.



1

Sufficient payroll records for a period beginning Jan. 1, 2020 for at least three years.



2

Employers will not be asked for payroll records of work performed before Jan. 1, 2020.



3

No special format or record keeping system is required.



4

Records must be retained for current and past workers.

**Call:**  
720-913-WAGE (9243)

**Web:**  
DenverWages.org

**Email:**  
WageComplaints@DenverGov.org