ALAMEDA COUNTY MINIMUM WAGE BALLOT MEASURE

ELECTIONS CODE SECTION 9111 REPORT

Prepared for Alameda County Board of Supervisors
September 15, 2026

Contents

E 14th Street Commercial Corridor, Ashland

Introduction

The Board commissioned this report to assess potential impacts of the minimum wage ballot measure. The study does not offer policy or legal recommendations.

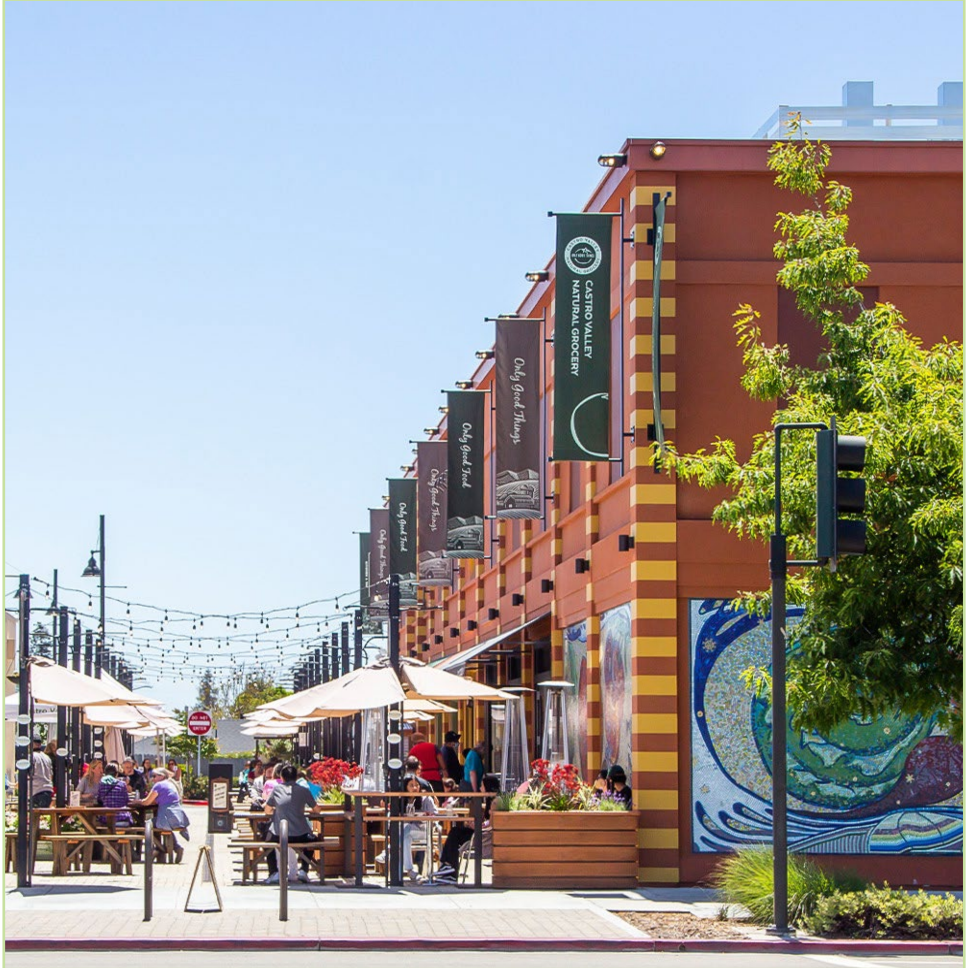
1. **Fiscal Impacts**
   Effects on County finances, including additional General Fund costs.

2. **Economic Impacts**
   Effects on businesses, employees, consumers, and the broader economy.

3. **Other Impacts and Considerations**
   Effects on nonprofits, family childcare providers, collective bargaining agreements and other issues.

4. **Socioeconomic and Racial Equity**
   Effects on socioeconomic and racial equity, including employment and food access.

Ballot Measure Overview



Castro Valley Marketplace

1. Raises the Minimum Wage in the Unincorporated County to $30/hr. Gradually by Size of Employer.
2. Applies to All Public- and Private-Sector Employment.
3. Applies to County-Owned and Leased Properties and Tenants Throughout the County.

Phased Schedule by Employer Size

Beginning July 1, 2027, wages rise on a schedule that varies by employer size. Once a tier reaches $30/hour, wages continue rising with a cost-of-living adjustment; by 2048 all three tiers converge into one uniform minimum wage.

LARGE EMPLOYERS

100+ employees & >$1B revenue

$30/hr by 2030

MEDIUM EMPLOYERS

26–99 employees (or 100+ under $1B)

$30/hr by 2035

SMALL EMPLOYERS

25 or fewer employees

$30/hr by 2037

Family childcare workers follow the small-employer schedule; janitorial workers follow the faster large-employer schedule regardless of their employer's size. Employers may not offset increases by cutting benefits or other non-management staff pay.

Phased Schedule by Employer Size

Ballot Measure Proposed Minimum Wages, 2027–2037

Effective Date	Large Employers	Medium Employers	Small Employers
7/1/2027	$19.90	$18.38	$18.21
7/1/2028	$23.30	$19.48	$19.12
7/1/2029	$26.70	$20.65	$20.07
7/1/2030	$30.00	$21.89	$21.08
7/1/2031	$30 + annual cost-of-living adjustment (a).	$23.20	$22.13
7/1/2032		$24.60	$23.24
7/1/2033		$26.07	$24.40
7/1/2034		$27.64	$25.62
7/1/2035		$30.00	$26.90
7/1/2036		$30 + annual cost-of-living adjustment (a).	$28.25
7/1/2037			$30.00
7/1/2038 to 7/1/2048	The minimum wage for all employer types shall converge into a single uniform minimum wage within 10 years after small employers reach a minimum wage of $30.00 (b).		

San Lorenzo Industrial Area

Notes:
(a) Minimum wage is adjusted annually on July 1 based on the increase in the Bay Area Consumer Price Index (CPI) or three percent, whichever is greater.
(b) (b) The ballot language states that the Alameda County Administrator shall develop and implement a schedule to achieve wage convergence, provided that the minimum wage is adjusted each year by the greater of 3 percent or the increase in the Bay Area CPI.

Unincorporated County Economic Profile

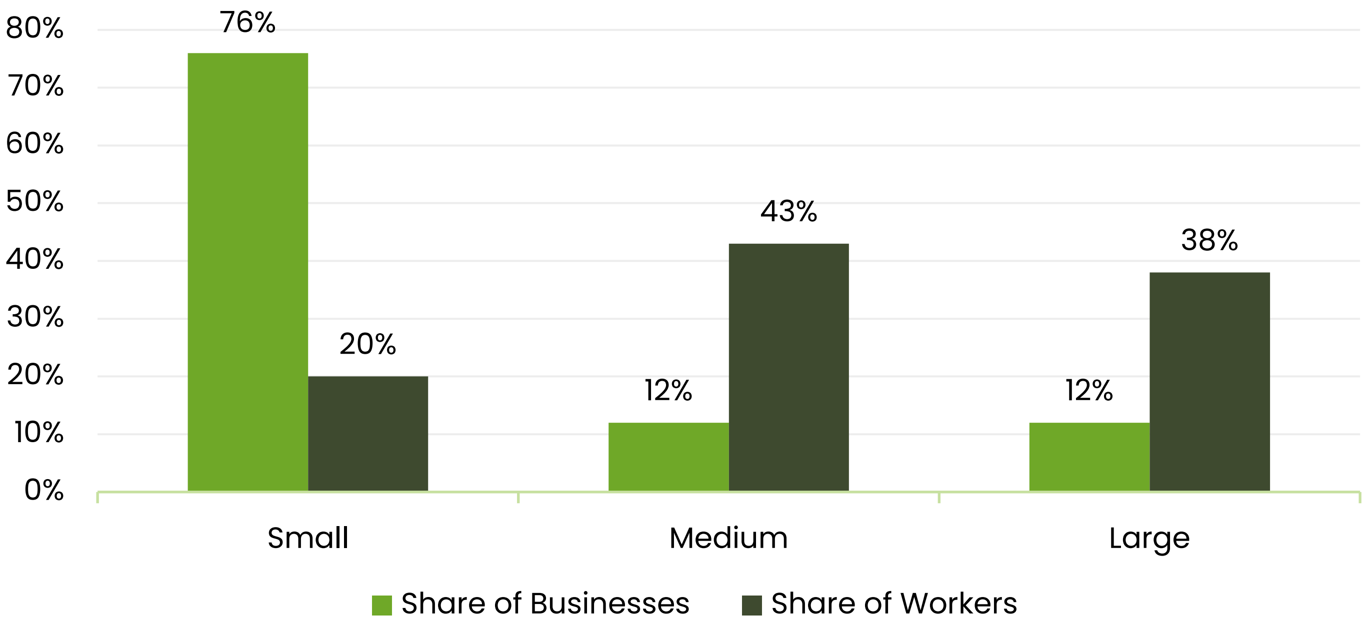
26,400
private-sector employees

3,100
private-sector businesses

2,160
public administration employees

$28.31
current median hourly wage

Estimated Employer Mix by Size Category



WORKERS BELOW THE PROPOSED MINIMUM

15–24%

of existing workers currently earn below the proposed 2027 minimum wage thresholds

29–53%

of workers currently earn below the minimum wages proposed in year 2030

Fiscal Impacts

1

Annual Personnel Expenditures

Raising all budgeted County positions currently paid below $30/hour to the $30 floor would increase annual personnel costs by an estimated **$28.1 million**. These annual costs do not include personnel costs for Temporary Assignment Pool (TAP) positions, estimated at approximately **$2.7 million** annually.

2

County-Leased Facilities

Future increases in labor costs associated with janitorial, security, and landscaping services provided in County-leased facilities will likely be passed through to the County. Estimated impacts of the Measure range from approximately **$1.1 million to $1.8 million** per year across the County's 38 leased facilities (about 884,000 square feet).

3

County Building Service Contracts

Pass-through effects on County-owned facilities' service contracts (security, janitorial, landscaping, and related services) are estimated at approximately **$1.0 million to $1.7 million** annually.

Fiscal Impacts

Summary of Estimated Annual Fiscal Impacts to County

Budgeted Personnel Expenditures	$28.1 million
Temporary Assignment Pool (TAP) Expenditures	$2.7 million
Building Service Contracts and Operating Expenses at County-Leased Facilities	$2.1 to $3.5 million
Total Annual Fiscal Impacts to County	**$32.9 to $34.3 million**

Sources: Alameda County; BAE, 2026.

Other Fiscal Impacts

Oakland Coliseum Complex Stadium

1 **Oakland Coliseum Complex**

The Coliseum Complex has required an average annual operating subsidy of approximately $6 to $9 million from the County over the past decade; the pending sale of the County's ownership interest, if completed, would eliminate this exposure.

2 **Alameda County Fairgrounds**

The Fairgrounds are currently self-supporting and would not be expected to require new subsidies, though higher operating costs would likely affect ticket prices, the Fair's vendors, and the Fair's long-term financial performance.

Economic Impacts: Business Responses, Benefits, and Trade-offs

Academic studies suggest that businesses respond to minimum wage increases through a mix of strategies such as modest adjustments to employment, productivity, prices, profits, and investment. Response will depend on industry conditions, market structure, and the size of the wage increase.

LIKELY BENEFITS

- Higher earnings for directly affected workers, plus spillover wage gain
- Mixed but generally positive effects on employee retention and household financial security
- Increased household spending that generates additional sales, partially offsetting higher employer costs

POTENTIAL RISKS

- Substantially exceeding neighboring jurisdictions' wages could raise operating costs in the unincorporated County and affect business retention/attraction
- Possible reductions in local jobs for lower-wage workers with lower educational attainment
- Potential disincentives to business investment in underserved areas

Other Impacts and Considerations

1. ## Nonprofits and Community-Based Organizations

   The Measure would raise operating costs for the County's nonprofit and community-based organizations, potentially requiring increased revenue generation, grant funding, program reductions, or some combination of these responses. Research on minimum wage ordinances and nonprofits suggests large statutory increases can reduce nonprofit-sector employment, while smaller increases have not shown strong evidence of employment or other effects.

2. ## Collective Bargaining Agreements

   Existing research suggests collective bargaining coverage generally remains stable following incremental minimum wage increases, with statutory floors and negotiated wages tending to move together. The Measure provides a collective bargaining waiver where waiver provisions are set forth in clear and unambiguous terms.

Other Impacts and Considerations: Child Care

1 Child Care Providers

The proposed minimum wage requirements would apply to covered employees at child care centers in the unincorporated areas, in addition to the Measure's specific provisions related to Family Child Care providers. Providers required to raise wages without additional funding may need to increase tuition or rates, reduce staffing or enrollment, relocate, or close.

First 5 estimates that increasing compensation to $30/hour for teaching staff and Family Child Care owners at child care sites serving children ages 0–5 in the unincorporated areas would increase annual direct compensation costs by approximately **$7.8 million**. This estimate excludes school-age programs, non-teaching staff, or related payroll tax, benefit, wage compaction, and other costs.

2 Measure C

There is no clear legal guidance regarding whether this separate voter-approved measure may direct or restrict the use of Measure C revenues, which are governed by the requirements and authorities established under the voter-approved Measure C Ordinance and its adopted 5-Year Plan. Measure C may help offset impacts for some eligible participating providers, but not all child care providers affected by the proposed Minimum Wage Measure will be eligible for or receive Measure C funding.

Socioeconomic and Racial Equity

People of color make up a disproportionately high share of low-wage workers in the unincorporated county and stand to benefit significantly from a higher minimum wage. Analysis of racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty and affluence, economic opportunity indices, and survival-budget data shows substantial geographic and racial disparities across the unincorporated county.

WAGE GAP BY RACE

People of Color throughout the unincorporated county are less likely than White workers to earn above the survival income threshold.

Most Common Worker Industries :
Health care & social assistance • Construction • Accommodation & food services

FOOD ACCESS GAPS

Several lower-income unincorporated communities have limited access to fresh food and other critical retail and services.

The report notes that access could be further affected if the Measure constrains food retailer expansion or relocation in these areas.

Comparison to Other Minimum Wage Ordinances

	Alameda County Ballot Initiative	Los Angeles County	County of San Mateo	City of Hayward
Applicability				
Applies to All Private-Sector Workers	Yes	Yes (a)	Yes (a)	Yes (a)
Applies to All Public Agencies	Yes	No	No	No
Wage Tiers by Employer Size	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Applies to Public Agency-Owned/Leased Properties & Tenants in Properties outside of jurisdictional boundary	Yes	No	No	No
Exempts Nonprofits	No	No	No	No
Exempts Employees Covered by Collective Bargaining Agreements	Yes	No	Yes (b)	Yes (c)
Monitoring and Enforcement				
Dedicated Agency/Office	n.a.	Yes	Yes	No
Full-time employee equivalent positions	n.a.	24	(d)	n.a.
Annual Budget	n.a.	$5,760,000	(d)	n.a.

Key Takeaways

1 Fiscal Impacts

Adds an estimated $32.9–$34.3M in annual County costs by 2030 across budgeted personnel, TAP positions, and building operating expenses in leased and owned facilities.

2 Economic Impacts

The measure will lift earnings for a substantial number workers and increase consumer spending. Increased operating costs will create a competitive disadvantage for local businesses compared to neighboring cities.

3 Other Impacts and Considerations

Raises real questions for nonprofits, Measure C childcare funding, and collective bargaining dynamics.

4 Socioecnomic and Racial Equity

Communities of color and lower-income areas stand to benefit economically from increased wages, but the measure may exacerbate existing geographic and racial disparities in access to employment and opportunities.

Questions?

Livermore Valley Wine Area

Cherryland Community Center

San Lorenzo Theater