

## MINIMUM WAGE

# Domestics get 23% salary hike

### POST REPORTER

THE new national minimum wage (NMW) is R21.69 for each ordinary hour – an increase of 4.5%. This will come into effect on March 1.

The new minimum wage for South Africa was published in the latest Government Gazette on Monday night. The minimum wages for domestic workers and farm workers have been increased by 23% and 16% respectively.

Farm workers are now entitled to a minimum wage of R21.69 per hour; domestic workers are entitled to a minimum wage of R19.09 an hour; workers employed on an expanded public works programme are entitled to R11.93 an hour.

In a statement, the DA said the above-inflation minimum wage increases gazetted would lead to further job losses at a time when unemployment was already rampant and rising.

“Few sectors will be able to absorb such steep increases at a time of serious economic decline. As it is, the domestic service sector has been particularly hard hit by Covid-19 with many employers struggling to keep on their domestic workers ...

“The DA supports sustainable wage increases in the agricultural and domestic service sectors. We do not believe that increases should be forced by way of regulation. Increases should be determined by employers and trade unions entering into negotiations ...

“The DA would have preferred the minister (Thulas Nxesi) to take the current economic climate into consideration and apply inflation-related increases.

“The government itself had to renege on the three-year wage agreement that it entered into with public servants because of financial constraints.

“Many employers in the private sector will now find themselves in a similar situation.”

Eunice Dhladhla, the assistant secretary-general of the SA Domestic Service and Allied Workers’ Union, said while they were thankful for the increase, it was still not enough.

“It is just a drop in the ocean compared to the services that domestic workers provide.

“Besides being hard workers, they take care of a household when the employer is absent, and they protect it.”

Dhladhla said the increase could have been rounded off to R20 per hour.

“What is 9c and what difference will it make?

“We, as domestic workers, are always last to be recognised.

“While we are grateful to the government for the increase, we still have another battle to fight to be recognised and compensated accordingly for the work we do.”