



State of Vermont
Department of Labor
Commissioner's Office
5 Green Mountain Drive
P.O. Box 488
Montpelier, VT 05601
labor.vermont.gov

[phone] 802-828-4301
[fax] 802-828-4181

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Committees on Human Services and Ways & Means; Senate Committees on Health & Welfare and Finance

FROM: Vermont Department of Labor

DATE: December 31, 2025

SUBJECT: Information on Wages for Child Care Providers as Requested in Act 76 of 2023

This memorandum is prepared at the request of the Legislature in Act 76 of 2023, for the House Committees on Human Services and Ways & Means and the Senate Committees on Health & Welfare and Finance. Information was produced by the Department of Labor, in consultation with the Department for Children and Families and the Joint Fiscal Office.

Introduction

Act 76 of 23, *an act relating to child care, early education, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance*, addressed child care and early education, prekindergarten education, taxation, and workers' compensation. In this Act, the Department of Labor ("the Department") is required to prepare information for the Legislature on the minimum wages for early care and education providers and any other relevant state data pertinent to these wage levels. This memorandum covers the minimum wage applicable to early care and education providers, wages in the occupations broken down by percentiles, comparisons to national and regional state average wages, and notes on the occupations.

Sec. 23a. REPORT; CHILD CARE PROVIDER WAGES

On or before January 1, 2026, the Department of Labor, in consultation with the Department for Children and Families Child Development Division and the Joint Fiscal Office, shall submit information to the House Committees on Human Services and on Ways and Means and to the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance providing estimated current minimum wage levels based on Vermont and other state data regarding wage levels for early care and education providers.

State Minimum and Average Wages

Early child care providers, preschool educators, and special education preschool educators are all subject to Vermont's state-level minimum wage, set at \$14.01 for 2025 and \$14.42 as of January 2026. State minimum wage is calculated annually as outlined in 21 V. S. A. §

384 and applies to almost all employees in Vermont, excluding a few select categories in 21 V. S. A. § 383 (individuals employed in agriculture, domestic service in a private home, by the United States, public supported nonprofit except laundry, nurse's aides or practical nurses, individual in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity, home deliveries of newspapers/advertisements, taxi cab drivers, outside salespersons, and students). This exemption would not apply to child care workers or education providers in almost any setting.

Minimum wage protections apply to individuals providing child care or Pre-K services in a private Family Child Care Home (FCCH) when the FCCH employs those individuals. An individual working in a private home as a caretaker or nanny, exclusively for a resident of the home, would likely be considered an individual employed in domestic service and exempt from state law. Employees not protected by state wage protections are generally covered under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, which has a current minimum wage of \$7.25.ⁱ Federal protections apply to all workers not already covered by a more protective state law, including those exempt from state protections and those engaged in interstate commerce.

Average Wages

For the graphs below, note that the 25th percentile can be used as a proxy for an “entry-level” position and the 75th percentile can be used as a proxy for “experienced.”

Table 1

[Child Care Workers \(39-9011\); Wages by Percentile \(2024\)](#)

Area	Average	10th percentile	25th percentile	50 th percentile (median)	75th percentile	90 th percentile
Vermont	\$18.93	\$14.90	\$16.75	\$18.19	\$21.82	\$23.99
Connecticut	\$17.50	\$15.69	\$16.25	\$16.97	\$17.72	\$20.40
Massachusetts	\$19.88	\$16.29	\$17.51	\$18.89	\$22.29	\$23.60
Maine	\$16.63	\$14.55	\$14.90	\$16.69	\$17.18	\$18.26
New Hampshire	\$16.26	\$11.49	\$13.87	\$16.62	\$18.22	\$21.11
New York	\$18.37	\$15.13	\$16.57	\$17.61	\$20.20	\$21.76
Rhode Island	\$16.74	\$14.46	\$14.57	\$16.79	\$17.76	\$20.20
U.S.	\$15.93	\$11.01	\$13.46	\$15.41	\$17.77	\$21.42

Data compiled by the Vermont Department of Labor.

Vermont has the second-highest median wage in the region for child care workers. There are only four states nationwide with higher average wages for this occupation: California, Massachusetts, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

Table 2*Preschool Educator, Except Special Education* (25-2011); Wages by Percentile (2024)

Area	Average	10 th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile	90th percentile
Vermont	\$22.35	\$17.14	\$17.87	\$21.52	\$26.84	\$29.96
Connecticut	\$23.35	\$16.11	\$17.31	\$20.75	\$23.39	\$37.54
Massachusetts	\$23.38	\$17.54	\$18.53	\$21.65	\$23.95	\$35.06
Maine	\$19.61	\$16.82	\$17.33	\$17.82	\$21.97	\$24.17
New Hampshire	\$19.07	\$15.11	\$17.06	\$18.03	\$21.35	\$23.38
New York	\$24.06	\$16.69	\$17.71	\$21.91	\$27.97	\$35.25
Rhode Island	\$18.46	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$17.33	\$18.02	\$24.86
U.S.	\$19.93	\$13.61	\$15.03	\$17.85	\$22.38	\$28.88

Data compiled by the Vermont Department of Labor.

While Vermont does not have the highest median wage for preschool educators in the region, wages for the 10th and 25th percentiles are consistently higher than in most other states in New England and the national average.

Table 3*Special Education Teachers, Preschool* (25-2051); Wages by Percentile (2024)

Area	Average	10 th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile	90th percentile
Vermont	\$70,490	\$60,430	\$64,390	\$70,160	\$78,850	\$82,760
U.S.	\$72,610	\$38,740	\$49,370	\$62,190	\$81,330	\$132,530

Data compiled by the Vermont Department of Labor.

Note: There is significant inconsistency and variability in the coding and wages of this occupation, making regional comparison difficult.

Regional Variation

During committee discussion before the passage of Act 76, concerns were raised that regional disparities might exist in the wages paid to individuals in early child care and education. Below, information on wage percentiles is split into the different regions of the state: the Burlington-South Burlington Metro area, nonmetropolitan Northern Vermont, and nonmetropolitan Southern Vermont.

Data is not available on regional differences in wages paid to special education preschool educators.

Table 4*Child Care Workers (39-9011); Wages by Region (2024)ⁱⁱ*

Location	10 th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile	90th percentile
Vermont	\$14.90	\$16.75	\$18.19	\$21.82	\$23.99
Burlington-South Burlington	\$15.00	\$15.86	\$18.48	\$20.23	\$22.37
Metro Northern Vermont, nonmetropolitan	\$14.31	\$17.68	\$18.18	\$22.49	\$25.25
Southern Vermont, nonmetropolitan	\$14.81	\$15.15	\$18.19	\$21.36	\$23.99

Data compiled by the Vermont Department of Labor.

The median wage was consistently in the \$18 range across the state. While the median wage for child care workers was slightly higher in the Burlington-South Burlington Metro area, those in nonmetropolitan areas earned a wider range of possible wages, with lower 10th percentile and higher 90th percentile wages than the Burlington-South Burlington metro area.

Table 5*Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2011); Wages by Region (2024)ⁱⁱⁱ*

Location	10 th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile (median)	75th percentile	90th percentile
Vermont	\$17.14	\$17.87	\$21.52	\$26.84	\$29.96
Burlington-South Burlington	\$17.53	\$17.99	\$21.53	\$22.62	\$30.62
Metro Northern Vermont, nonmetropolitan	\$15.24	\$17.44	\$21.00	\$26.86	\$29.87
Southern Vermont, nonmetropolitan	\$17.36	\$18.04	\$21.60	\$27.72	\$29.96

Data compiled by the Vermont Department of Labor.

There are no significant wage discrepancies between nonmetropolitan Northern Vermont and the rest of the state; workers in northern Vermont earn a higher 75th percentile wage than those in the Burlington metro area. Workers in nonmetropolitan Southern Vermont consistently earn higher wages than their northern or urban counterparts, until the 90th percentile.

Conclusion

Overall, early child care workers and educators consistently earn above the established state minimum wage and national averages. There are no significant and consistent differences by region within the state. With minimal exception, child care workers and educators in Vermont are entitled to the wages and protections of Vermont's minimum wage law. For additional information on this topic, please reach out to the Vermont Department of Labor's Economic and Labor Market Information division at labor.lmi@vermont.gov.

ⁱ Wage and Hour Division. (September, 2013). Fact Sheet #79: Private Homes and Domestic Service Employment Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). U.S. Department of Labor.

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/79-flsa-private-home-domestic-service>

ⁱⁱ O*NET. (May 20, 2025). Vermont Wages, 39-9011.00 – Child care Workers. US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<https://www.onetonline.org/link/localwages/39-9011.00?st=VT>

ⁱⁱⁱ O*NET. (June 26, 2025). Vermont Wages, 25-2011.00 – Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education. US Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://www.onetonline.org/link/localwages/25-2011.00?st=VT>