

Women who work for tips need yours



It's time for the check and when it arrives do you find yourself in a quandary about how much to leave for a tip? Maybe it's the service, maybe it's the balance in your bank account or maybe it's a guilty conscious – either way there's **a decision to be made about how much to leave as a tip**. Is it going to be the expected 20%, the modest 15% or the cinchy 10%?

In my **early naïve stage**, I thought tipping was a thank you for extra or attentive service. After all weren't they employees like the rest of us with salaries.

In my **taken advantage of stage**, I learned that many in management offered low paying salaries, with the expectation that I the customer would subsidize the employee's salary.

Now, in my **I can't believe you do this stage**, comes the realization of how much my tips really meant to all the women who serve me.

In the article *Tipped Workers Hope for Sub-Minimum Wage* for online WeNews, senior correspondent Sharon Johnson explains how the mostly female service providers rely on tips and how they have been deprived of decent earnings.

Federal legislation created the **"tip credit"** of sub-minimum wage which was originally set at 50% of minimum wage. Frozen since 1991, it's current value is only 29.4% or \$2.15 per hour.

Consider these statistics for women tip earners:

- A 40 hour week at federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hr averages about \$15,000 but a sub-minimum tip worker at \$2.15/hr only earns \$4,333
- Women make up 72.9% of tipped workers
- When compared to men, women earn 83 cents less per hour because

they are more inclined to be working in the fast food industry than restaurant dining

- Restaurant employers are suppose to make up the difference between a tip worker's salary and tips and the federal wage of \$7.25/hr, but many workers don't know about the law and are taken advantage of
- Restaurant owners and managers have been known to illegally take a share of tips, or hold back "fixed gratuities: or "customer service charges."

Amy Hanauer, executive director of the non-profit group Policy Matters Ohio credits an unexpected backlash to this policy from the "Occupy" movement which has exposed the failure of wages to meet basic needs of the vulnerable.

Rather than waiting for the Federal government to act, **many states are responding by either eliminating the sub-minimum wage or increasing the set amount.** As more of the labor force enters low paying jobs, state legislators see this as stimulating the local economy and keeping tipped workers from sliding deeper into poverty.

Next time your paying your check, know that your tip is very likely needed, especially by a woman in these tough economic times.

Souce:

<http://www.womensenews.org/story/equal-payfair-wage/120205/tipped-workers-hope-hike-in-sub-minimum-wage#.TzU07qaKSb8.email>

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