

Colorado's minimum wage becomes 1st in U.S. to drop

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DENVER -- Colorado's minimum wage will drop 3 cents in the new year, marking the first decrease in any state's minimum wage since the federal minimum was adopted in 1938.

Colorado's wage is dropping from \$7.28 an hour to the federal minimum of \$7.25. That's because Colorado is one of 10 states that tie the minimum wage to inflation. The goal is to protect low-wage workers from having flat wages as the cost of living goes up.

But Colorado's provision also allows wage declines. That means the minimum wage is going down because the state's consumer price index fell 0.6 percent last year.

State labor officials say about 48,000 Coloradans earned the minimum wage in 2008. But they won't necessarily take a pay cut. Officials say they expect many employers to keep paying workers at the old rate.

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/nation/1967725,colorado-minimum-wage-drop-123109.article>