

**Minimum Wages Act, 1948**  
**&**  
**Minimum Wages (Punjab) Rules, 1950**

**Objective:** The object of the Act is to prevent exploitation of labour; prevent employment of sweated labour in the interests of general public and so in prescribing minimum wage rates, the capacity of the employer need not be taken into account.

**Applicability:** The Act is applicable in respect of the employments specified in the Schedule of the Act. Presently, the Punjab Government has notified 67 employments in the said Schedule.

**Responsibility of the Employer:** An employer of the scheduled employment is required to pay the minimum wages to its employees as notified by the government from time to time. He is also required to maintain registers regarding registers of wages, fines, deductions for damage or loss and overtime. He is also required to send annual return to the Inspector for the year ending on 31<sup>st</sup> December by 1<sup>st</sup> of February next year.

**Complaints:** A worker can made a complaint with regard to payment of less than the minimum wages or unauthorised deductions made to the Labour Inspector Grade-I or II of the area.

**Claims:** A claim application in duplicate can be made in Form VI by an employee; in Form – VI-A by a group of employees; in Form – VII by an Inspector or person permitted by the Authority u/s 20 for claiming the difference of minimum wage and the wages actually paid, or for claim wages for weekly offs or rest days or for wages at the over-time rate. The application should be presented to the Competent Authority appointed under the Act i.e. the Assistant Labour Commissioner or the Labour-cum-Conciliation Officer of the concerned area.

**Bar to Suit:** Civil Courts are barred to entertain the suit for recovery of wages once a claim has been lodged with or could have been recovered by application to the Competent Authority under the Act.

**Contracting out:** Any contract or agreement whereby a worker relinquishes or reduce his right to receive minimum wages is null and void to that extent.

**Penalties:** For non compliance of the provisions of the Act, an employer may be punished for imprisonment up to six months or fine up to Rs. 500/- or both.