

California's \$20 Fast Food Wage Law Is Hurting the Workers and Families It Was Meant to Help



Fast food jobs are SHRINKING in California—while neighboring states hold steady.

- Seasonally-adjusted data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and [Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis](#) show that **California's quick-service restaurants have LOST 33,047 jobs** since September 2023 when AB 1228 was signed into law.
- Meanwhile, fast food jobs in **Oregon and Nevada have grown** during the same period.

DATE	Total Fast Food Jobs CALIFORNIA	Total Fast Food Jobs Nevada	Total Fast Food Jobs Oregon
Sept 2023	740,110	63,490	74,277
Oct 2023	736,176	63,461	73,531
Nov 2023	735,299	64,039	73,720
Dec 2023	735,437	64,276	74,008
Jan 2024	739,712	64,148	72,847
Feb 2024	731,688	64,134	72,899
Mar 2024	729,614	64,171	73,390
Apr 2024	730,893	64,345	73,372
May 2024	726,889	64,408	73,694
June 2024	719,690	64,086	73,769
July 2024	721,588	64,271	73,371
Aug 2024	718,360	64,218	73,403
Sep 2024	716,060	64,243	73,909
Oct 2024	717,907	64,590	75,170
Nov 2024	717,072	64,359	74,742
Dec 2024	716,462	64,543	74,922
Jan 2025	716,804	64,453	75,597
Feb 2025	711,792	64,048	75,747
Mar 2025	707,256	64,082	75,413
Apr 2025	703,354	65,286	75,567
May 2025	707,757	64,855	77,884
June 2025	706,514	64,716	77,714
July 2025	707,063	64,770	77,825
Sept 2023 – July 2025	-33,047	+1,280	+3,548

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, All Employees: Leisure and Hospitality: Limited-Service Restaurants and Other Eating Places in [California](#), [Nevada](#) and [Oregon](#); retrieved August 21, 2025. NOTE: This data is not collected for Arizona.

- California's [fast food employment](#) is **now at its lowest sustained growth rate** since the Great Recession, barring the COVID-19 pandemic.



Fast food workers are losing hours—and paychecks.

- A [recent analysis](#) shows that California's non-tipped restaurant workers—many in fast food—have **lost up to five hours of work per week** since the \$20 wage took effect in April 2024.
- That's a **loss of up to 250 hours per worker per year—or seven weeks of work**—and thousands of dollars in lost wages.



Food prices are climbing.

- A [report](#) by the Berkeley Research Group found that food prices at California's fast food restaurants have surged **by 14.5% since September 2023**—nearly double the national average of 8.2%.