

## **Lidl Ireland gives pay rise to 800 employees**

### **Lidl Ireland commit to 800 employees by matching the latest hourly rate which was recommended by the Living Wage Technical Group.**

Lidl Ireland has made a huge commitment to its employees by matching the latest rate of €12.30 as recommended by the Living Wage Technical Group.

The new 2019 figure of €12.30 represents an increase of 40c per hour over the 2018 rate of €11.90. The increase has been driven by changes in the cost of living and changes in the taxation system. The current housing crisis, and associated increases in rent levels, continues to be the main driver of the wage rate increasing for 2019.

In 2015, the company was the first major nationwide retailer to commit to paying the Living Wage. The change will benefit 800 employees (15pc) across Ireland, while all other employees currently earn in excess of the new Living Wage.

The Living Wage is an independently assessed and recommended rate of income considered necessary to have a socially acceptable standard of living.

#### **Supporting staff**

Lidl's continued commitment to its employees to pay the Living Wage is just one of a number of initiatives introduced to all 4,300 employees across the country in recent years. As the company continues to steadily grow in the market, it continues to share its success with all employees as well as creating an environment where colleagues' holistic needs are prioritised including their overall sense of wellbeing.

Currently, Lidl Ireland is the only supermarket to offer paid maternity as well as paternity leave to all employees across the country. The German discount chain also offer a free, confidential counselling service to all employees through Laya Healthcare's Employee Assistance Programme. It offers support to Lidl employees and their families by providing immediate help and guidance in managing whatever work or personal issues they are facing.

Like many retail businesses, a high proportion of staff are on part-time contracts for various reasons from flexibility to operational requirements. Lidl recently offered contracts with a minimum of 30 hours to all store and warehouse employees to facilitate their changing needs.

A similar commitment is being announced to employees in Lidl Northern Ireland using the UK Living Wage Foundation's recommended rate of £9.30 per hour.

Announcing Lidl's commitment to pay the latest Living Wage, Maeve Mc Cleane, HR director for Lidl Ireland said; "We are delighted to be the first major nationwide food retailer to commit to the latest Living Wage in Ireland. Already, 85 per cent of our team earn in excess of the Living Wage, however it is important for us to ensure that those whose hourly pay is below €12.30 benefit from an increase. This would bring them to a level that is more reflective of enjoying a better standard of living.

"At Lidl we are in a fortunate position that the last few years have seen our business go from strength to strength - our people are undoubtedly central to this success. By continually investing in our team, we continue to retain and attract the best employees and, in turn, continue to serve our 1.5 million plus weekly customers the highest quality products cheaper than any of our competitors," she added.

The Living Wage is a wage which makes possible a minimum acceptable standard of living. In principle, a living wage is intended to establish an hourly wage rate that should provide employees with sufficient income to achieve an agreed socially acceptable standard of living. The calculation takes clothing, food, housing, health, education, transportation, and social/ recreational costs into consideration.

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