As Maryland’s early childhood community prepares to the phase of the minimum wage to $15 per hour, effective family and staff communication will be essential. The Child Care Company has developed the sample letters as a tool to help programs begin that communication process. These tools are free to use.

**Sample Letter For Families:**

The Maryland General Assembly recently passed [House Bill 166/Senate Bill 280 (Chs. 10 and 11)](http://www.ciclt.net/sn/leg/l_detail2.aspx?ClientCode=mdcounties&L_ID=1769377&L_State=MD&L_Session=2019&L_Prior=2018) . This law requires all Maryland employers to raise the minimum wage to $15 per hour over the next few years. (**Name of Child Care Program)** is supportive of all of its employees making a living wage. Like you, I know our employees to be dedicated professionals who provide the highest-quality care for your child each day. An increase to $15 an hour will have a positive impact on their families.

At the same time, families must understand one of the immediate outcomes of raising the minimum wage to $15 at our school. Our program’s tuition must be increased by approximately **(Enter Percentage)** over the next five years to account for this increase in wages. (**Enter Percentage)** is just an estimate. We may experience an even more significant increase as some of our suppliers also raise their rates to cover the cost of paying their employees $15 an hour.

To better understand the connection between the State’s $15 minimum wage and the cost of child care, please consider the following. **(Name of Child Care Program)** is a tuition-dependent program. Specifically, our sole source of revenue is parent tuition. Like most early childhood programs, labor and benefits encompass about 70% of our program’s budget. Maryland Child Care laws explicitly dedicate the number of Teachers we must have in each classroom; therefore, we cannot reduce the number of employees in our program as a means to curb costs. This video does a great job of explaining the unique nature of child care finances, <https://youtu.be/krejcn2ivYU>

The need to raise tuition is not unique to **(Name of Child Care Program).**

Experts in the field expect that most child care programs across the State of Maryland will likely experience similar increases in tuition. We are doing our best to balance the needs of our workers and the needs of families like yours.

We are sharing this information with our families now because we want you to be prepared for the incremental changes in tuition. Our first increase goes into effect on **(enter date)**. Our new tuition rates are **(enter tuition rates)**. If you are concerned about this increase in tuition, I encourage you to check out the income guidelines for the Maryland State Child Care Scholarship Program. This program provides early childhood tuition supports. To learn more, visit <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program>

Thank you for continuing to trust **(Name of Child Care Program)** for the care and education of your child

As Maryland’s early childhood community prepares to the phase of the minimum wage to $15 per hour, effective family and staff communication will be essential. The Child Care Company has developed the sample letters as a tool to help programs begin that communication process. These tools are free to use.

**Sample Letter For Staff:**

The Maryland General Assembly recently passed [House Bill 166/Senate Bill 280 (Chs. 10 and 11).](http://www.ciclt.net/sn/leg/l_detail2.aspx?ClientCode=mdcounties&L_ID=1769377&L_State=MD&L_Session=2019&L_Prior=2018) This law requires all Maryland employers to raise the minimum wage to $15 per hour over the next few years. (**Name of Child Care Program)** is supportive of all of its employees earning a living wage. We know that an increase to $15 an hour will have a positive impact on our employees.

As (**Name of Child Care Program)**works to increase its employee’s wages, here are a few things we encourage all employees to consider.

* We expect the minimum wage to phase in incrementally. Our target date for full implementation is **(Enter Date).**
* If your hourly rate increases, monitor your payroll deductions. Ensure that enough taxes are being deducted from your paycheck each pay period to avoid unexpected income taxes due. (**Name of Child Care Program) cannot provide tax advice and** encourages you to consult with your tax preparer or to use this free tool provided by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in determining your deductions <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/tax-withholding-estimator>. You may change your tax deductions at any time by submitting updated tax withholding forms. Please see **(Enter Name)** for the necessary forms.
* If you are currently eligible for any social services (e.g., Women Infants and Children (WIC), housing subsidies, health insurance subsidies, child care scholarships/subsidies, etc.), check with those agencies to determine how an increase in your hourly rate may impact your continued eligibility. Income guidelines may be different for each agency; therefore, it is essential that you check with each agency.

To cover the minimum wage increase for all our employees, (**Name of Child Care Program)**will realize an increase in tuition. A separate letter will be issued to families explaining the correlation between employee salaries and parent tuition. You are encouraged to read the parent letter so that you have a comprehensive understanding of the financial impacts to our program. However, employees must refrain from engaging in any conversations with families about this topic. Instead, refer families to **(Enter Name)** if questions should arise about the content of the parent letter.

(**Name of Child Care Program)** will continue to keep you informed as we phase in the minimum wage increase as required by law. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.