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Read the report at: <http://www.policymattersohio.org/ProtectingPay2011.htm>

Wage claims filed across Ohio

A report issued today by Policy Matters Ohio finds that minimum-wage complaints were filed in 73 of Ohio's 88 counties during the state's Fiscal Year 2009, and most were resolved in favor of the worker.

The report examined all of the 940 minimum-wage cases filed between July 1, 2008, and June 30, 2009 (Fiscal Year 2009), at the Bureau of Labor & Worker Safety (LAWS) of the Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of Industrial Compliance and Labor. These included cases filed for nonpayment of the minimum wage, unpaid wages or failure to pay overtime. Other key findings from the data included:

- Complaints resolved in favor of the worker were filed in a significant majority of Ohio counties.
- Urban counties accounted for most of these complaints.
- The accommodations and food service industry, including restaurants, accounted for by far the largest number of complaints, followed by retail trade (among those where an industry was identifiable).

National studies have found that a significant portion of vulnerable workers are unlikely to lodge wage complaints because of immigration status, fear of job loss, lack of knowledge of their rights and other reasons. The Policy Matters study examined only complaints to the state; workers may also file cases under U.S. labor law.

"Ohio needs to upgrade its overall reporting on wage and hour enforcement," said Zach Schiller, Policy Matters Ohio research director and author of the report. "The lack of easily available public information is part and parcel of a wage and hour enforcement effort that has been handicapped by a lack of resources. Gathering and providing more information on wage and hour complaints is a step toward the more vigorous enforcement Ohio workers need."

Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.



