

**Background:**

The Leichtag Foundation strives to make decisions and take actions that have a positive impact on our community, our staff and the people we serve. As a responsible employer, we believe that employees should earn a wage that meets the needs of daily living and provide some discretionary income. We recognize that paying a living wage constitutes a critical investment in the long-term prosperity of our organization by fostering a healthy, skilled, and dedicated workforce.

**Definition:**

The [California Self-Sufficiency Standard](#) measures the minimum income necessary to cover all of a non-elderly (under 65 years old) and non-disabled individual or family's basic expenses – housing, food, child care, health care, transportation, and taxes – without public or private assistance. In addition to providing a generous benefits package, Leichtag Foundation pays a living wage taking into consideration the calculations provided by the California Self-Sufficiency Standard for San Diego County residents using a blended family composition. While this Self-Sufficiency Standard is an important resource to Leichtag Foundation, determining the final value of the living wage that will be paid is in the full and sole discretion of management.

**Application:**

Direct Staff

The policy applies to all employees employed by Leichtag Foundation. Staff earning a salary or wage will earn at minimum a living wage. The living wage is reevaluated annually based on available living wage data for San Diego County.

Contractors, Consultants, and Vendors

This policy also applies when hiring contract labor, consultants, and vendors. Leichtag Foundation will prioritize service providers that also pay a living wage to their staff or that will provide the ability for the Farm to adjust the fee structure so that their staff are compensated according to the policy. Living wage clauses are included in all agreements and renegotiated agreements with contractors we hire.

Benefits in Consideration

In instances where non-mandatory benefits are provided to staff, the basic hourly wage due to staff may be adjusted to reflect the positive impact these benefits have on the employee's ability to meet basic needs and have some discretionary income. These benefits include health, dental and disability coverage for staff covered by this policy.

Benefits may be provided on a cost-shared basis; however, the premiums paid by the employee cannot reduce the wage to below an acceptable level with respect to a living wage.

Interns, Apprentices and Fellows

Wage guidelines for intern, apprentices and fellows are addressed in a separate policy.