



May 2, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Niagara Herbalist is Niagara's Latest Certified Living Wage Employer

The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network is pleased to announce that [The Niagara Herbalist](#) has become a certified living wage employer.

The Niagara Herbalist is a family owned and operated recreational cannabis retail store located in St. Catharines. They opened on April 1, a few months after being selected as one of 25 new retailers in the Ontario retail cannabis store lottery. The Niagara Herbalist is currently the only fully operational retail cannabis store in Niagara region, employing nine full time and six part time staff.

"We wanted to be involved in positive incentives for the community from day one. The first step in doing so was to offer employment opportunities for locals that reflected this. It only made sense to offer livable wages. The employees are happy to come into work and to be part of our "work family". We have a team who cares about the business but who also understands its responsibility in educating our customers and being the first legal recreational cannabis dispensary after prohibition. We are very lucky to have them," says The Niagara Herbalist co-owner Kevin Trethowan.

"There are nearly 20 employers across Niagara so far who have chosen to become living wage certified," says Melenie Neamtz, Vice-Chair of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network. "We are pleased to see so many local employers who recognize the value and benefits of paying a living wage."

A living wage reflects what earners need to be paid based on the actual costs of living and being included in the community. A living wage is not the same as the legislated minimum wage. It is a voluntary commitment that employers can make to compensate directly-employed and contract-employed full-time and part-time workers. The 2018 living wage for Niagara region has been calculated to be \$17.99/hour. If an employer's total compensation package includes benefits such as dental and prescription drugs, the living wage can be lowered by about \$1.50/hour. Learn more about Niagara's living wage at www.wipeoutpoverty.ca

Niagara-area employers who are interested in becoming living wage certified can contact the Ontario Living Wage Network for more information at <http://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/>

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The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network is a collective of over 30 agencies and individuals working to wipe out poverty in Niagara through education, collaboration, and advocacy to address poverty's root causes.

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