

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
Washington

INACTIVE

ADMINISTRATOR APPROVES PUERTO RICAN NEEDLEWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

A wage order establishing minimum wage rates for homeworkers doing needlework in Puerto Rico, from 12-1/2 cents to 20 cents an hour, effective December 2, was signed today by Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, U. S. Department of Labor. Factory rates for needlework are set at 20 to 22-1/2 cents an hour. The establishment of minima for Puerto Rico at rates less than the 30 cents an hour statutory minimum for the United States was made possible by an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act passed this spring.

The wage order puts into effect with one exception the recommendations of a committee under the chairmanship of Msgr. Francis J. Haas, which went to the Island and investigated economic and competitive conditions in the industry.

The exception was the recommendations for fabric and leather gloves on which there will be a further hearing, the date to be announced later.

At the same time the Tariff Commission announced that, at the request of Colonel Fleming, it has instituted an investigation of competition in the United States market between hand-sewn articles from Puerto Rico and importations of similar articles from other sources.

The wage order prescribes payment of at least the following rates,

12-1/2 cents an hour for work in the home on handkerchiefs, household articles, cotton underwear, infants' wear, needlepoint and hand-hooked rugs.

15 cents an hour for work in the home on silk underwear.

20 cents an hour for work in the home and the factory on children's, ladies', men's and boys' apparel.

20 cents an hour for work in factories on handkerchiefs; household articles; cotton underwear; infants' wear; needlepoint; hand-hooked rugs.

22-1/2 cents an hour for work in the factories on silk underwear.

As provided in the recent amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act enabling the establishment of separate minimum wage rates for Puerto Rico, the Administrator will issue piece work rates commensurate with these hourly wage rates before the effective date of the wage order. He will also issue regulations prescribing records to be kept by those placing needlework in the homes in Puerto Rico.

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