

TEXTE

Pret boosts pay to £10 per hour for thousands of staff

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Image source Getty Image

The sandwich chain said it wanted to invest in its staff as it recovered from the coronavirus pandemic which has battered its business. It is the second time it has raised pay since September and comes as employers face a widespread worker shortage. Some Pret staff have complained about pay and their workload during Covid.

The sandwich chain, which has 550 shops around the world, said its basic pay rates would increase from between £9.40 and £9.56 to between £9.80 and £10.15 per hour, with baristas being paid more. That means at least 6,900 of its more than 8,500 staff will be paid over £10 per hour.

Pret said its mystery shopper bonus scheme will also be boosted from an additional £1 an hour, to £1.25. Under the scheme Pret outlets are visited, rated and staff are rewarded according to the standard of service, products and cleanliness they're providing.

Several other retailers have boosted staff pay already as they struggle to hire and retain workers. Supermarkets Sainsbury's, Aldi and Morrison's all recently increased their minimum hourly pay to £10. In September, Pret's rival Costa gave workers a 5% pay bump to £9.36 an hour, while Asian fast food chain Itsu boosted its minimum hourly rate by 11% to at least £10.40.

Pret's chief executive Pano Christou said: "We've said all along that as our business recovered, we wanted to invest back into our people. "After a difficult couple of years, it gives me so much joy to be able to give our hard-working shop teams this news."

Pret's cafes are usually based in city centres, catering to office staff grabbing takeaway snacks and lunches. It was hit hard by the pandemic as many people started working from home and many of its outlets were closed for long periods.

However, the chain has faced criticism during the crisis, after it ruled last summer that workers would no longer be paid during their breaks - a policy that remains in place. Former Pret staff also told the BBC in December that a drinks subscription service it introduced had left some workers feeling overwhelmed by their workload. The service, which offers unlimited hot and cold drinks for £20 a month, faced customer complaints when some popular drinks were unavailable.

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