Regulation of Employment

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Bureau of Labor Standards

Labor Laws of the State of Maine provide protection for people who work in Maine. The Maine Department of Labor administers the laws, which all employers must follow. Department representatives inspect workplaces to ensure compliance. Citations and penalties may be issued to employers who do not comply.

This poster describes some important parts of the laws. A copy of the actual laws or formal interpretations may be obtained from the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, by calling (207) 623-7900. (The laws are also on the Bureau's web site.)

Maine Law (Title 26 M.R.S.A. § 42-B) requires every employer to place this poster in the workplace where workers can easily see it.

This poster is provided at no cost by the Maine Department of Labor and may be copied.

Time of Payment

Employees must be paid in full at least every 16 days. Employees must be notified of any decrease in wages or salary at least one day prior to the change.

Payment of Wages

Employees who leave a job must be paid in full on the next payday or within two weeks, whichever is earlier. Any vacation pay earned is due at the same time.

Severance Pay

Businesses that have 100 or more employees at a single location may have to provide severance pay to employees if that business location closes or has a mass layoff.

Unfair Agreement

Employers cannot require that an employee pay for losses such as broken merchandise, bad checks, or bills not paid by customers, nor for special uniforms and certain tools of the trade.

Rest Breaks

Most employees must be offered a 30-minute paid or unpaid rest break after 6 hours of work.

Nursing mothers must be provided with unpaid break time or be permitted to use their paid break or meal time to express milk. The employer must make reasonable efforts to provide a clean room or location, other than a bathroom, where the milk can be expressed.

Family Medical Leave

An employee who has worked for the last 12 months at a workplace with 15 or more employees can have leave for up to 10 paid or unpaid weeks in 2 years for:

- Birth or adoption of a child or domestic partner's child;
- Serious illness of the employee or immediate family member, including domestic partner;
- Organ donation;
- Death or serious health condition of the employee's spouse, domestic partner, parent or child if it occurs while the spouse, domestic partner, parent or child is on active duty;
- Serious illness or death of a sibling who shares joint living and financial arrangements with the worker.

(Federal family medical leave is different. Call 603-666-7716 for more information.)

Leave for Victims of Violence, Assault, Sexual Assault or Stalking

Must be allowed upon request if an employee (or a child, parent or spouse of an employee) is a victim of violence, assault, sexual assault or stalking or any act that would support an order for protection under Title 19-A M.R.S.A., c. 101 and the employee needs the time to:

- Prepare for and attend court proceedings; or
- Receive medical treatment; or
- Obtain necessary services to remedy crisis.

Leave to Care for Family

If the employer's policy provides for paid time off, the employee must be allowed to use up to 40 hours in a 12-month period to care for an immediate family member who is ill.

Mandatory Overtime

Most employers may not require employees to work more than 80 hours of overtime in any consecutive 2-week period. A nurse who has worked 12 consecutive hours may not be disciplined for refusing to work additional hours and must be allowed at least 10 hours off after working 12 hours. (There are exceptions to this law.)

Note: *Maine employers may also be covered under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act. For more information, contact the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Office at 603-666-7716.*

For more information, contact:

Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Standards
45 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0045
located at: 45 Commerce Drive
Telephone: 207-623-7900
TTY users call Maine Relay 711.
Web site: www.maine.gov/labor/bls
Email: mdol@maine.gov

At-Will Employment - Under Maine law, an at-will employee may be terminated for any reason not specifically prohibited by law. In most instances, you are an at-will employee unless you are covered by a collective bargaining agreement or other contract that limits termination. If you have questions about at-will employment, contact your human resources department or the Bureau of Labor Standards.

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