

Minnesota Employers Must Comply With Expanded Meal and Rest Break Requirements Beginning in January 2026

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On June 14, 2025, Governor Walz signed into law amendments to Minnesota's meal and rest break requirements, which go into effect on **January 1, 2026**. The amendments can be found at Minnesota Statutes §§ 177.253 and 177.254.

Key Changes to Rest Break Requirements

The amendments require employers to allow employees “a rest break of at least 15 minutes or enough time to utilize the nearest convenient restroom, whichever is longer,” within each four consecutive hours of work.

This is a significant change from the current standard, which only mandates “adequate time to utilize the nearest convenient restroom” for every four consecutive hours worked.

Key Changes to Meal Break Requirements

Under the amendments, employers must also “allow each employee who is working for six or more consecutive hours a meal break of at least 30 minutes.”

The current standard only requires employers to “permit” employees working more than eight consecutive hours “sufficient time to be permitted to eat a meal.”

Expanded Employee Remedies

The amendments also broaden the remedies available to employees whose employers do not provide these required rest and meal breaks. For example:

- If an employer **does not** provide the required rest breaks, the employee is entitled to compensation for the missed break at their regular rate of pay, plus an additional equal amount as liquidated damages.
- If an employer **does not** provide the required meal breaks, the employee is entitled to the same remedies: compensation at their regular rate of pay, plus an additional equal amount as liquidated damages.

Compliance Recommendations for Minnesota Employers

Minnesota joins a growing number of jurisdictions that have expanded meal and rest break laws and remedies for employees.

Minnesota employers should review their current meal and rest break policies to ensure they comply with the new amendments and make necessary adjustments prior to the effective date of **January 1, 2026**.

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