

Hours of work & overtime under BC law

Minimum daily pay

If your employer asks you to come to work for the day and then sends you home early, he or she must pay you for at least two hours, even if you didn't work two hours.

If your employer asks you to come to work for more than eight hours, and then sends you home early, he or she must pay you for at least four hours.

If work stops for a reason beyond your employer's control, you must be paid for two hours or the actual time you worked, whichever is more. But, if you come to work and are unfit to work, (due to illness, for example,) your employer only has to pay you for the time you actually worked, even if it is less than two hours.

Split shifts

A split shift is when your employer requires you to divide your work day into two parts. Under BC law, you must complete your split shift

within 12 hours of when your shift started. For example, if you start at 9 in the morning, your split shift must end by 9 that evening.

Hours free from work

Your employer must give you at least 32 hours in a row free from work each week. If he asks you to work during this rest period, he may pay you time-and-a-half for any hours you work.

You are entitled to have eight hours off between shifts unless required to work because of an emergency.

No excessive hours

Your employer cannot ask you – or allow you – to work excessive hours that can harm your health or safety.

Daily overtime

After working eight hours in a day you must be paid time-and-a-half for the next four hours

worked, and double time for all hours worked after 12 hours in a day.

Weekly overtime

If you work more than 40 hours in a week, your employer must pay you time-and-a-half for every hour after 40 hours.

Meal breaks

Your employer must give you a 30-minute meal break after five hours of work in a row. He or she does not have to pay you for the meal break unless he requires you to work or be available to work during the meal break.

Your employer is not required to provide you with coffee breaks.

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This article is a brief introduction to some of the laws about working in BC. For more detailed information, go to the website of the Employment Standards Branch at: www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/



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