



# Meal Periods and Rest Breaks

**For: NonAcademic Staff**

**Subject: Wages and Salaries**

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**Contact: Workforce Policy and Labor Relations**

607.255.4652

[hrpolicy@cornell.edu](mailto:hrpolicy@cornell.edu)

[www.hr.cornell.edu](http://www.hr.cornell.edu)

## Meal Periods

All staff, including temporary and casual staff, must take appropriate unpaid meal periods as described below. Meal periods cannot be accumulated to provide for a prolonged time-off period. Staff members who believe they are not being allowed to take meal periods should contact their local Human Resources Representative.

When a nonexempt employee works more than six hours which includes the period of 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the department must provide and the employee must take at least 30 minutes for the meal period. Such 30-minute meal period must be taken and completed within the 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. timeframe.

If a nonexempt employee is scheduled to work a shift which begins before 11:00 a.m. and continues later than 7 p.m., the employee must take and complete an additional meal period of at least 20 minutes between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

When a nonexempt employee is scheduled to work a shift of more than 6 hours which begins between 1 p.m. and 6 a.m., the employee must take a meal period of at least 30 minutes at a time approximately mid-way between the beginning and the end of the shift.

If a particular work schedule is not covered in the above examples, then whenever a staff member works more than 6 hours, a minimum 30 minute meal period must be taken approximately mid-way between the start and end of that shift.

## **Rest Breaks**

While not required by law, allowing rest breaks is within the discretion of each department which will establish its own practices within guidelines listed below:

A rest break of less than 20 minutes is considered time worked

Rest break time may not be added to the lunch hour or other off-duty time.

Rest break time cannot be accumulated to provide for a prolonged time-off period.

Scheduling of rest breaks for individuals should not interfere with the department's normal operation.

Rest breaks should not occur at the beginning or conclusion of the work day.

## **Additional Resources**

For further guidance, please see "[Meal Periods and Rest Breaks- Frequently Asked Questions.](#)"

### **NOTE:**

**For Cornell University policy information, visit the [University Policy Office.](#)**