



Maryland wage and hour cheat sheet

Minimum wage, overtime, breaks, final pay, and record retention on one sheet. Rates verified August 2026.

Minimum wage

\$15.00/hr for all employers regardless of size (effective Jan 1, 2024, under the Maryland Fair Wage Act). The state rate is frozen, no 2025 or 2026 statewide increase. Note higher county rates as of July 1, 2026: Montgomery County is \$18.00/hr for employers with 51 or more employees, \$16.50/hr for 11 to 50, and \$15.95/hr for 10 or fewer; Howard County is \$16.00/hr and Prince George's County is \$15.30/hr. A field/construction employer working in those counties must pay the higher local minimum.

Overtime

1.5x the regular rate for all hours over 40 in a workweek (Maryland Wage and Hour Law, tracks federal FLSA). Agricultural workers qualify for overtime only after 60 hours in a week.

Daily overtime

None. No daily overtime or double-time; overtime is weekly only (over 40 hours).

Meal break

No state meal-break requirement for adult employees (18+). Exception: the Healthy Retail Employee Act requires breaks only in retail establishments with 50+ employees (15 min for a 4-6 hour shift; 30 min for shifts over 6 consecutive hours), not applicable to typical field/construction work. Minors under 18 must get a 30-minute break for every 5 hours worked.

Rest break

No state paid rest-break requirement for adult employees. (Under federal law, if an employer chooses to offer a short break under 20 minutes, it must be paid.)

Final paycheck

On or before the next regular payday, the day the employee would have been paid had employment continued (Md. Labor & Employment § 3-505). Applies whether fired or quit. Accrued unused vacation is payable unless a written, communicated policy states it is forfeited on separation.

How long to keep time records

Federal law requires keeping time cards 2 years and payroll records 3 years, and some states go longer. Keep the records where you can produce them; a wage claim is decided on whoever has the better records.

Rates verified August 2026. The statewide \$15.00 rate is frozen, with no automatic annual escalator, so it changes only with new legislation. Montgomery, Howard, and Prince George's Counties set higher local minimums that adjust on their own schedules, so employers on job sites there must pay the applicable county rate. This is general information, not legal or payroll advice. Check the Maryland labor department for the current rules, and talk to a professional for your situation.

Primary source: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/labor/wages/wagehrfacts.shtml>. Full list of sources: getclox.com/blog/maryland-time-tracking.