



Massachusetts 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 (effective Jan 1, 2023; unchanged for 2026, final step of the 2018 5-year phase-in, no increase scheduled). No local/employer-size variants. Tipped "service rate" is \$6.75/hr, provided tips bring the worker to at least \$15.00/hr.

Overtime

1.5x the regular hourly rate for hours worked over 40 in a workweek (M.G.L. c. 151, § 1A; 454 CMR 27.03). Aligns with the federal FLSA weekly-40 rule; some MA-specific exemptions differ from federal. The Sunday retail time-and-a-half premium fully phased out on January 1, 2023, so Sunday is now a normal pay day.

Daily overtime

None. No daily overtime and no double-time; Massachusetts calculates overtime on a weekly basis only (over 40 hours/week).

Meal break

30-minute meal break for shifts longer than 6 hours (M.G.L. c. 149, § 100). May be unpaid if the worker is fully relieved of duty and free to leave; if required to work or stay on-site during it, the time must be paid.

Rest break

No state rest-break requirement for adults. Massachusetts does not mandate paid short/coffee rest breaks; only the 30-minute meal period is required.

Final paycheck

If involuntarily terminated (fired/laid off): all final wages, including accrued unused vacation, are due on the day of discharge. If the employee quits: due on the next regular payday (M.G.L. c. 149, § 148). Late payment triggers strict liability with mandatory treble damages under the Wage Act. Massachusetts also requires payroll records to be kept for 3 years (M.G.L. c. 151, § 15).

How long to keep time records

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

Rates verified August 2026. The \$15.00 rate has held since January 1, 2023 as the final step of the 2018 phase-in, and no increase is scheduled, so a change would require new legislation or a ballot measure. This is general information, not legal or payroll advice. Check the Massachusetts labor department for the current rules, and talk to a professional for your situation.

Primary source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/minimum-wage-and-overtime-information>. Full list of sources: getclox.com/blog/massachusetts-time-tracking.