



International Labour Organization

★ Right to Rest ★

for domestic workers

Rest periods are times during which domestic workers are free to dispose of their time as they please.

Rest, including uninterrupted sleep and regular meal breaks, is fundamental to our mental and physical health, and enables us to be effective in our work. During rest periods, domestic workers should have the right to leave the employers' household, and spend time with family and friends.



24

hours minimum

of consecutive weekly rest, as prescribed by the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189), 2011.

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Uninterrupted daily rest

for sufficient sleep, recuperation, and commute between work shifts.

The right to rest is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 24.

The right to rest is an essential labour right, which can also be derived from the very first convention of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Convention No. 1 on Hours of Work in Industry, adopted in 1919.

Ensuring the Right to Rest for domestic workers results in...

Happier workers, who have more time for family, friends, community, leisure, and faith.



Healthier workers, who are suffering less stress and fatigue, and therefore are less prone to have mental and physical health problems.

Workers who are less likely to cause accidents and more capable of being patient in caring for the children and the elderly.

Happier families, who are spending more quality time together.



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Better quality and more productive service for the family.

Healthier and happier homes.



Better societies.



Ensuring 24 hours minimum consecutive **weekly rest** is the first step in limiting the working time of domestic workers. To ensure sufficient consecutive daily rest, the European Working Time Directive of 2003 recommends that **daily rest** should be at least 11 consecutive hours.

Establishing these minimum rest periods has the potential to significantly improve domestic workers' safety and health at work and their work-life-balance.

Employers who ensure the right to rest will benefit from a rested and efficient domestic worker at lower risk of making serious mistakes that could harm the employer's family or home.

How has the Right to Rest been realised at policy-level?

...for live-in workers



...for live-out workers



Argentina

Daily rest: 9 consecutive hours.

Daily rest: 12 consecutive hours.

Breaks: 3 consecutive hours for lunch.

Weekly rest: 35 hours, starting Saturday at 1pm.

South-Africa

Daily rest: 12 consecutive hours.

Breaks: Daily rest of 12 hours can be reduced if the worker is given a 3 hour meal break.

Weekly rest: 36 hours, including Sunday.

Austria

Daily rest: 10 consecutive hours, including the hours between 9pm and 6am.

Daily rest: 12 consecutive hours, including the hours between 9pm and 6am.

Breaks: 3 hours to be taken during the day.

Breaks: 20min to 1 hour, depending on hours worked, if daily working time exceeds 4.5 hours.

Weekly rest: Sundays every other week, plus one day of each working week, from 2pm until the start of the following work day.

Countries that are already ensuring minimum weekly and daily rest periods can build upon this by granting domestic workers the right to annual leave, rest breaks and personal days, as well as by regulating the times when workers are not performing tasks but may be called upon by the employer (stand-by time).

