

## Employee Meal and Rest Break FAQs

Q. What is the difference between a meal break and a rest break?

A. Meal Break: Unpaid for at least a 30 minute, uninterrupted break for employees who work 6 or more hours.

Rest Break: A paid break (often 10 minutes) during which employees are generally required to remain in or near the work area to be available if needed. Rest breaks are not required and may or may not be available based on operational need.

Q. What is an uninterrupted meal break?

A. Uninterrupted meal break: An uninterrupted meal break is one in which the employee is relieved of job responsibilities for a minimum 30 minutes.

Interrupted meal break: If an employee is interrupted more than two times during a meal break for business- related reasons, or total interruptions are for more than four minutes during a meal break, then the meal break should be paid and is considered an interrupted meal break.

Q. What should I do if my meal break is interrupted?

A. If a meal break is interrupted, the employee should contact his/her supervisor and discuss taking a 30 minute uninterrupted meal break later in the shift. An employee should not skip a meal break without supervisor approval.

Q. Are meal breaks rounded?

A. No. Meal breaks are actual time recorded.

Q: How are auto deductions for meal breaks determined for departments?

A: For hourly employees on Kronos in the Medical Center, automatic meal deductions are determined by departments.

Q: Are smoking breaks given in addition to my meal and rest breaks?

A: No. Smoking breaks are included in meal and rest breaks.

Q: While on meal break, how are interruptions such as assisting visitors, inquiries

from fellow employees, returning to work, new patient arrivals, required patient procedures recorded?

**A:** If the employee is interrupted for a work-related reason more than two times or for a total of more than 4 minutes, the employee should be paid for the entire meal break. If such an interruption as previously defined occurs, the employee would need to discuss taking an uninterrupted meal break with his/her supervisor later in the shift. Otherwise, the meal break is interrupted and should be paid.

**Q:** How is the meal break deduction cancelled?

**A:** Please refer to [Kronos](#) and [E-timesheet](#) website

**Q:** At what time should meal breaks be taken during the shift?

**A:** The employee should receive and be encouraged to take at least a 30-minute uninterrupted meal break at or near the middle of the shift. The meal break should not be taken at the beginning or end of the shift.

**Q:** We have monitors in our break room to watch patients. How does that impact an uninterrupted meal break?

**A:** If the employee takes a meal break in a break room with monitors, but does not attend to the monitors and is not interrupted as described above, the meal break would be considered uninterrupted.

If the employee stays at their work location and observes monitors (even if there is no action to be taken), performs other work-related duties or is interrupted for a work-related reason more than twice or for a total of more than 4 minutes, the employee should be paid for the entire 30-minute meal break. The reason is the employee has not been relieved of all work duties. It is recommended that the supervisor have conversation with the employee to set expectations and help manage to those expectations.