

Salary, Commission, and Tips

Exercise



When you work, it's to earn money. But the rules aren't the same for all jobs. What rules apply to the salary you are paid?

Minimum Wage

In Quebec, the government sets the minimum wage. Minimum wage is currently \$12.50 per hour. Your employer can pay you more but usually can't pay you less than minimum wage. But some jobs have a different minimum wage.

Minimum Wage Is Different for Some Jobs

For some types of jobs, the law lets your employer pay you less than minimum wage. Here are some examples:

- babysitting at home
- work for some non-profit organizations
- internships in a vocational training program recognized by law.

Employees Who Earn Tips

If you have an opportunity to earn tips at work, then the minimum wage is \$10.05 per hour.

You are considered an “employee who earns tips” if you have a job where employees usually get tips, such as:

- a restaurant where customers eat on site or that has a delivery counter
- a place that offers tourists a place to stay, such as a hotel, inn, or campground
- a place where alcohol is sold for consumption on the premises, such as a bar or bistro.

But you are not automatically considered an “employee who earns tips” if you work in a restaurant where customers order at a counter and pay before they eat. This is the case in many fast food chains or coffee shops, even if a few generous customers may give you their spare change.

If you are an employee who earns tips, you are allowed to keep your tips in addition to your regular salary. This means your employer must pay you at least minimum wage, no matter how much you may be receiving in tips. However, tips are considered taxable income when you file and pay your taxes.

Any tips you earn belong to you alone. Your employer cannot force you to share them with your co-workers. But nothing stops you from sharing them with your co-workers, as long as everyone agrees.

Being Paid on Commission or Based on Productivity

There are some jobs where your salary is not calculated by the number of hours you work. For example, you may be paid a percentage of the amount of money you brought in from sales. In this case, we say that you are paid on commission.

If you pick strawberries or raspberries, your salary will usually be based on the weight of what you pick:

- for raspberries: \$3.71 / kilogram
- for strawberries: \$0.99 / kilogram

Payday: When You Get Your Salary

Most employers have to pay you on a regular basis, and the time between paydays cannot be more than 16 days.

If you start a new job, your employer will pay you within the first month following your first day of work.

If you start a new job, your employer must pay you in the month that follows your first day of work.

If your usual payday falls on a holiday, you must be paid the day before.

You can be paid

- in cash,
- by cheque, or
- by transfer to your bank account.

You must receive a pay stub along with your pay so you can make sure you have received the correct amount.

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Quiz

1. Decide whether the following situations are legal or illegal and explain why.

a) You work as a bartender and your employer offers to pay you \$10.25 / hour.

LEGAL or ILLEGAL

b) You start a new job on December 1st and your employer tells you that your first paycheck won't be until December 26th.

LEGAL or ILLEGAL

c) You work as a clerk/salesperson in a bakery. Next to the cash register, the employees have a tip jar. The employer decides to lower the employees' salary to \$11.00 / hour because they are now employees who earn tips.

LEGAL or ILLEGAL

d) You work in a restaurant and you put your tips straight into your pocket without even counting how much you've earned.

LEGAL or ILLEGAL

e) Your employer pays you simply by giving you cash in an envelope.

LEGAL or ILLEGAL
