

# Mistakes at the Cash Register: Do You Have to Pay for Them?

Exercice



**We all make mistakes. But what if this happens at work? Can your employer force you to pay for a mistake at the cash register or if you break a few dishes?**

## To Err Is Human ...

As a general rule, you don't have to pay for mistakes you make at work.

A cash register that doesn't balance and broken dishes are losses that are a normal part of doing business. They are called "operating costs" or "current expenses," and an employer should expect things like this to happen. As an employee, you don't have to pay for these losses, even if they are your fault.

But be careful! If you make mistakes too often, or if you are careless in your work, you might have to pay back your employer.

## Can Your Employer Subtract Money from Your Paycheque?

Your pay belongs to you. Your employer isn't allowed to take away money from your paycheque to cover mistakes you might have made.

What happens if you signed an employment contract that says you will pay back your employer for any mistakes you make at the cash register? You can still refuse to pay and your employer can't take any money from your paycheque.

However, if you **do** agree to pay your employer back, you can give your employer permission to deduct the money from your paycheque. In this situation, you must sign a document confirming that you have given your employer permission to do this.

### Information Is Key

If you have questions about your rights, or if you are having a problem with your employer, you can contact the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST or workplace health and safety board). The CNESST will explain your rights and those of your employer.

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Quiz

1. What's the one situation when an employer could make an employee reimburse broken material?

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2. Does an employer have a right to take money from an employee's paycheque?

Why or why not?

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3. If an employer doesn't respect the law, what organization can you contact?

What can this organization do to help you?

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