News Release

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U.S. Labor Department Recovers Over $137,000 in Back Wages For 26 Memphis Verizon Workers

NASHVILLE, TN -- Verizon Communications, Inc., operator of Verizon Select Services, Inc., has paid $137,870 in overtime back wages to 26 employees at its Memphis location after a U.S. Department of Labor investigation found that employees had not been properly paid as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The investigation by the department’s Wage and Hour Division, covering the period from August 2002 to July 2004, determined that Verizon technicians and customer service associates were not paid for short breaks, lunch periods and hours worked prior to and following assigned shifts.

“Supervisors permitted employees covered by the FLSA to work more than 40 hours in a workweek, but then would not approve wages for the work performed,” said Edison Fernández, Nashville’s Wage and Hour assistant district director. “Additionally, the law does not permit employers to deduct 15-minute breaks from employees work time or to require them to work through lunch periods without compensation.”

Fernández added that the company cooperated during the investigation and has agreed to comply with the FLSA in the future.”

The law requires that covered workers be paid at least the federal minimum wage of $5.15 per hour. It also requires that workers are paid one-and-one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 in a single workweek and that employers maintain accurate records of employees’ wages, hours and other conditions of employment.

The Wage and Hour Division recovered nearly $200 million in back wages in fiscal year (FY) 2004 for more than 288,000 workers. Average days to resolve a complaint decreased in FY 2004 from 108 days to 92 days.

For more information about the FLSA, call the department’s toll-free help line at 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243); visit the Internet at www.wagehour.dol.gov; or contact the Nashville Wage and Hour Division office located at 1321 Murfreesboro Rd., Suite 511; phone: (615) 781-5343.

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