

Snow Day...No Pay?? Paying Employees for Weather-Related Office Closures

February 3, 2015



Winter storms have hit various parts of the country over the past two weeks, and spring temperatures are still months away. In the face of inclement weather, employers frequently have questions about whether they must pay their employees in the event of office closures due to snow.

For non-exempt employees—whether hourly or salaried—the answer is simple. Under federal wage and hour law, non-exempt employees must be paid only for hours actually worked. If the office is closed, regardless of the reason, non-exempt employees need not be paid. Obviously, though, if employees are permitted to work from home during periods of inclement weather, they should be required to track all hours worked and should be compensated accordingly.

Unlike non-exempt employees, exempt employees who work any part of the workweek must be paid their full weekly salary. Accordingly, they may not be docked pay if the business closes for inclement weather (unless the office shuts down for a full workweek). However, if the workplace remains open but an exempt employee misses work due to weather (be it transportation difficulties or other personal reasons), the employee can have his pay docked for full-day absences only. Deductions from salary for less than a full day's absence are not permitted.

Employers also must remember that workplace policies, union contracts, and state laws (including those relating to [call-in pay](#)) may provide employees with greater rights to snow day pay.