

§ 778.114

such a case must not be less than the statutory minimum wage.

[46 FR 7310, Jan. 23, 1981, as amended at 76 FR 18857, Apr. 5, 2011]

§ 778.114 Fixed salary for fluctuating hours.

(a) An employee employed on a salary basis may have hours of work which fluctuate from week to week and the salary may be paid him pursuant to an understanding with his employer that he will receive such fixed amount as straight time pay for whatever hours he is called upon to work in a workweek, whether few or many. Where there is a clear mutual understanding of the parties that the fixed salary is compensation (apart from overtime premiums) for the hours worked each workweek, whatever their number, rather than for working 40 hours or some other fixed weekly work period, such a salary arrangement is permitted by the Act if the amount of the salary is sufficient to provide compensation to the employee at a rate not less than the applicable minimum wage rate for every hour worked in those workweeks in which the number of hours he works is greatest, and if he receives extra compensation, in addition to such salary, for all overtime hours worked at a rate not less than one-half his regular rate of pay. Since the salary in such a situation is intended to compensate the employee at straight time rates for whatever hours are worked in the workweek, the regular rate of the employee will vary from week to week and is determined by dividing the number of hours worked in the workweek into the amount of the salary to obtain the applicable hourly rate for the week. Payment for overtime hours at one-half such rate in addition to the salary satisfies the overtime pay requirement because such hours have already been compensated at the straight time regular rate, under the salary arrangement.

(b) The application of the principles above stated may be illustrated by the case of an employee whose hours of work do not customarily follow a regular schedule but vary from week to week, whose total weekly hours of work never exceed 50 hours in a workweek, and whose salary of \$600 a week

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is paid with the understanding that it constitutes the employee's compensation, except for overtime premiums, for whatever hours are worked in the workweek. If during the course of 4 weeks this employee works 40, 37.5, 50, and 48 hours, the regular hourly rate of pay in each of these weeks is \$15.00, \$16.00, \$12.00, and \$12.50, respectively. Since the employee has already received straight-time compensation on a salary basis for all hours worked, only additional half-time pay is due. For the first week the employee is entitled to be paid \$600; for the second week \$600.00; for the third week \$660 (\$600 plus 10 hours at \$6.00 or 40 hours at \$12.00 plus 10 hours at \$18.00); for the fourth week \$650 (\$600 plus 8 hours at \$6.25, or 40 hours at \$12.50 plus 8 hours at \$18.75).

(c) The "fluctuating workweek" method of overtime payment may not be used unless the salary is sufficiently large to assure that no workweek will be worked in which the employee's average hourly earnings from the salary fall below the minimum hourly wage rate applicable under the Act, and unless the employee clearly understands that the salary covers whatever hours the job may demand in a particular workweek and the employer pays the salary even though the workweek is one in which a full schedule of hours is not worked. Typically, such salaries are paid to employees who do not customarily work a regular schedule of hours and are in amounts agreed on by the parties as adequate straight-time compensation for long workweeks as well as short ones, under the circumstances of the employment as a whole. Where all the legal prerequisites for use of the "fluctuating workweek" method of overtime payment are present, the Act, in requiring that "not less than" the prescribed premium of 50 percent for overtime hours worked be paid, does not prohibit paying more. On the other hand, where all the facts indicate that an employee is being paid for his overtime hours at a rate no greater than that which he receives for nonovertime hours, compliance with

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the Act cannot be rested on any application of the fluctuating workweek overtime formula.

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§ 778.115 Employees working at two or more rates.

Where an employee in a single workweek works at two or more different types of work for which different non-overtime rates of pay (of not less than the applicable minimum wage) have been established, his regular rate for that week is the weighted average of such rates. That is, his total earnings (except statutory exclusions) are computed to include his compensation during the workweek from all such rates, and are then divided by the total number of hours worked at all jobs. Certain statutory exceptions permitting alternative methods of computing overtime pay in such cases are discussed in §§ 778.400 and 778.415 through 778.421.

§ 778.116 Payments other than cash.

Where payments are made to employees in the form of goods or facilities which are regarded as part of wages, the reasonable cost to the employer or the fair value of such goods or of furnishing such facilities must be included in the regular rate. (See part 531 of this chapter for a discussion as to the inclusion of goods and facilities in wages and the method of determining reasonable cost.) Where, for example, an employer furnishes lodging to his employees in addition to cash wages the reasonable cost or the fair value of the lodging (per week) must be added to the cash wages before the regular rate is determined.

[46 FR 7310, Jan. 23, 1981]

§ 778.117 Commission payments—general.

Commissions (whether based on a percentage of total sales or of sales in excess of a specified amount, or on some other formula) are payments for hours worked and must be included in the regular rate. This is true regardless of whether the commission is the sole source of the employee's compensation or is paid in addition to a guaranteed salary or hourly rate, or on some other

basis, and regardless of the method, frequency, or regularity of computing, allocating and paying the commission. It does not matter whether the commission earnings are computed daily, weekly, biweekly, semimonthly, monthly, or at some other interval. The fact that the commission is paid on a basis other than weekly, and that payment is delayed for a time past the employee's normal pay day or pay period, does not excuse the employer from including this payment in the employee's regular rate.

[36 FR 4981, Mar. 16, 1971]

§ 778.118 Commission paid on a workweek basis.

When the commission is paid on a weekly basis, it is added to the employee's other earnings for that workweek (except overtime premiums and other payments excluded as provided in section 7(e) of the Act), and the total is divided by the total number of hours worked in the workweek to obtain the employee's regular hourly rate for the particular workweek. The employee must then be paid extra compensation at one-half of that rate for each hour worked in excess of the applicable maximum hours standard.

§ 778.119 Deferred commission payments—general rules.

If the calculation and payment of the commission cannot be completed until sometime after the regular pay day for the workweek, the employer may disregard the commission in computing the regular hourly rate until the amount of commission can be ascertained. Until that is done he may pay compensation for overtime at a rate not less than one and one-half times the hourly rate paid the employee, exclusive of the commission. When the commission can be computed and paid, additional overtime compensation due by reason of the inclusion of the commission in the employee's regular rate must also be paid. To compute this additional overtime compensation, it is necessary, as a general rule, that the commission be apportioned back over the workweeks of the period during which it was earned. The employee must then receive additional overtime compensation for each week