

# Protecting Hotel Employees from Injury Ordinance

Seattle's Protecting Hotel Employees from Injury Ordinance seeks to reduce the frequency and occurrence of injuries associated with hotel room cleaning.

## Which employees are protected by this law?

Hourly employees who perform room cleaning at a Seattle hotel or motel of 100 more guest rooms ("large hotel") are protected by this law, regardless of immigration status.

## Which employers must follow this law?

The law applies to employers that own, control, or operate a large hotel in Seattle and to any employer that contracts to provide room cleaning at a large hotel in Seattle.

## Workload limitations

The law limits the maximum square feet of guest room floor space that an employee can be required to clean during their workday. The limit fluctuates depending on the number of hours the employee works in a workday and the number of strenuous room cleanings the employee performs.

**Subject to some exception, an employer will owe an employee premium pay of 3 times their normal hourly rate for the time that the employee cleans above the fixed limit for the workday.**

## What does it mean to perform a room cleaning?

An employee cleans a room when the employee performs services/tasks that are required to prepare or maintain the cleanliness of the physical guest room.

## Work hours

If an employee's workday consists of 8 hours or more, the employee's workload limit is 4500 square feet of guest room floor space. If the employee works fewer hours than 8 hours, the limit is prorated. The prorated amount averages to be approximately 9.375 square feet per minute (562.5 square feet/hour) of work.

## Premium pay

An employer may ask an employee to clean more than the limit for that workday if:

- Before the employee accepts, the employer must inform the employee of the size of the assignment (total square footage) and the time that will be allowed for the assignment;
- The employee must voluntarily agree to clean more than the limit;
- An employer cannot indicate or imply that the employee must agree to the assignment; and
- The employer must pay the employee premium pay.

### WHO IS COVERED?

Our ordinances cover employees working inside Seattle city limits, regardless of their immigration status or the location of the employer.

If your situation does not qualify for investigation by us, we will refer you to another agency for help.

### RETALIATION

An employer cannot retaliate against an employee for:

- Asserting their rights under these laws.
- Filing a complaint with OLS.
- Telling others about their rights.

### OUR SERVICES

- Investigations of complaints.
- Outreach to workers.
- Technical assistance for business.
- Resources and referrals.

Language interpretation, translations and accommodation are available. OLS does not ask about immigration status.

All services are free.



## OFFICE OF LABOR STANDARDS

The mission of OLS is to advance labor standards through thoughtful community and business engagement, strategic enforcement and innovative policy development, with a commitment to race and social justice.

## MORE INFORMATION (206) 256-5297

[laborstandards@seattle.gov](mailto:laborstandards@seattle.gov)  
[seattle.gov/laborstandards](http://seattle.gov/laborstandards)

## Strenuous room cleanings reduce the workload limit

An employee’s limit is reduced by 500 square feet for every strenuous room cleaning performed over 9 in a workday.

A strenuous room cleaning is the cleaning of a check-out room; a stayover room that requires the cleaning, removal, or setting up of a cot, rollout bed, hideaway sofa, pet bed, or crib; or a stayover room that has not been cleaned for more than 36 hours since first occupied by a guest.

A checkout room is a room that requires cleaning due to the departure of the guest. A stayover room is a room that requires cleaning, but where the guest’s stay has not yet ended.

		Number of strenuous room cleanings in total room cleanings			
		9 or fewer	10	11	12
Workday hours	8 or more	4,500 sq ft	4,000 sq ft	3,500 sq ft	3,000 sq ft
	7	3,937.5 sq ft	3,437.5 sq ft	2,937.5 sq ft	2,437.5 sq ft
	6	3,375 sq ft	2,875 sq ft	2,375 sq ft	1,875 sq ft
	5	2,812.5 sq ft	2,312.5 sq ft	1,812.5 sq ft	1,312.5 sq ft
	4	2,250 sq ft	1,750 sq ft	1,250 sq ft	750 sq ft
	3	1,687.5 sq ft	1,187.5 sq ft	687.5 sq ft	187.5 sq ft
	2	1,125 sq ft	625 sq ft	125 sq ft	0 sq ft
	1	562.5 sq ft	62.5 sq ft	0 sq ft	0 sq ft

## Calculating workload and team cleaning

If the employee cleans the room alone, the entire square footage of the guest room floor print is counted against the employee’s maximum total for that workday. If more than one employee contributes to the cleaning of the room (team cleaning), the square footage is divided equally amongst the employees.

Unless team cleaning is required by law or for employee safety, an employer may only assign employees to team cleaning if the employee has agreed to do so. Employers are permitted to assign team cleaning if needed to meet the requirements of a local, state, or federal law.

### Notice and Posting Requirements of This Law

Employers must display one of two notices of rights posters containing the information that employers must post to comply with the notice and posting requirements of [all four hotel employee protection laws](#).

The [Notice of Rights for Hotel Employees](#) poster is for employees of hotels.

The [Notice of Rights for Employees of Ancillary Hotel Businesses](#) is for employees of ancillary hotel businesses.

Both posters are available electronically on the Office of Labor Standards [Resource and Language Access Page](#).