



CHAPTER 290 - WAGES, HOURS AND DISMISSAL RIGHTS

290.010. What constitutes a day's labor. – From and after the first day of May, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, the period of eight hours shall be and constitute a legal day's work; but nothing in this section shall be so construed as to prevent parties to any contract for work, services or labor from agreeing upon a longer or shorter time. This section shall not apply to persons hired or employed by the month, nor to laborers or farm hands in the service of farmers or others engaged in agriculture.

290.020. Limitation of working hours in certain industries, exception by consent of worker. – It is hereby declared to be unlawful for any person, company or corporation engaged in carrying on any kind of mining, mechanical, chemical manufacturing or smelting business, to work their employees in any mill or mills, or plants, while engaged in crushing rocks and mine products, containing mineral or ores, or engaged in separating the minerals or ores from rock and such combination with which the mineral or ores are mixed, or reducing or roasting, or refining or smelting minerals or ores, from and after the time such rocks, or combination of rocks and mine products, or minerals or ores are taken out of the mines, at such labor or industry, for a period of time longer than eight hours in a day of twenty-four hours, without their consent, and it is hereby declared that eight hours shall constitute a day of employment, for all laborers, or employees, engaged in the kind of labor or industry aforesaid.

290.030. Penalty. – Any person or persons, company or corporation who shall violate any of the provisions of section 290.020 shall, on conviction, be fined in a sum not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than five hundred dollars.

290.080. Employees paid semimonthly, exception – statement of deductions – violation, misdemeanor. – All corporations doing business in this state, and all persons operating railroads or railroad shops in this state, shall pay the wages and salaries of their employees as often as semimonthly, within sixteen days of the close of each payroll period; provided, however, that executive, administrative and professional employees, and sales people and other employees compensated in whole or in part on a commission basis, at the option of such employers, may be paid their salaries or commissions monthly. Such corporations and persons either as a part of the check, draft or other voucher paying the wages or separately, shall furnish the employee at least once a month a statement showing the total amount of deductions for the period. Any corporation or person violating this section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined in any sum not less than fifty dollars, nor more than five hundred dollars, for each offense.

290.090. Factory employees paid semimonthly – amount withheld – penalty. – The employees of the operators of all manufactories, including plate glass manufactories, operated within this state shall be regularly paid in full of all wages due them at least once in every fifteen days, in lawful money, and at no pay day shall there be withheld from the earnings of any employee any sum to exceed the amount due him for his labor for five days next preceding any such pay day. Any such operator who fails and refuses to pay his employees, their agents, assigns or anyone duly authorized to collect such wages, as in this section provided, shall become immediately liable to any such employee, his agents or assigns for an amount double the sum due such employee at the time of such failure to pay the wages due, to be recovered by civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction within this state, and no employee, within the meaning of this section, shall be deemed to have waived any right accruing to him under this section by any contract he may make contrary to the provisions hereof.

290.095. Wage subsidies, bid supplements, and rebates for employment prohibited, when – violation, penalty. – 1. No contractor or subcontractor may directly or indirectly receive a wage subsidy, bid supplement, or rebate for employment on a public works project if such wage subsidy, bid supplement, or rebate has the effect of reducing the wage rate paid by the employer on a given occupational title below the prevailing wage rate as provided in section 290.262.

2. In the event a wage subsidy, bid supplement, or rebate is lawfully provided or received under subsections 1 or 2 of this section, the entity receiving such subsidy, supplement, or rebate shall report the date and amount of such subsidy, supplement, or rebate to the public body within thirty days of receipt of payment. This disclosure report shall be a matter of public record under chapter 610, RSMo.

3. Any employer in violation of this section shall owe to the public body double the dollar amount per hour that the wage subsidy, bid supplement, or rebate has reduced the wage rate paid by the employer below the prevailing wage rate as provided in section 290.262 for each hour that work was performed. It shall be the duty of the department to calculate the dollar amount owed to the public body under this section.

290.100. Thirty days' notice of reduction of wages, how. – Any railway, mining, express, telegraph, manufacturing or other company or corporation doing business in this state, and desiring to reduce the wages of its employees, or any of them, shall give to the employees to be affected thereby thirty days' notice thereof. Such notice may be given by posting a written or printed handbill, specifying the class of employees whose wages are to be reduced and the amount of the reduction, in a conspicuous place in or about the shops, station, office, depot or other place where said employees may be at work, or by mailing each employee a copy of said notice or handbill, and such company or corporation violating any of the provisions of this section shall forfeit and pay each party affected thereby the sum of fifty dollars, to be recovered by civil action in the name of the injured party, with costs, before any court of competent jurisdiction.

290.110. Payment due discharged employee – exceptions – penalty for delay. – Whenever any person, firm or corporation doing business in this state shall discharge, with or without cause, or refuse to further employ any servant or employee thereof, the unpaid wages of the servant or employee then earned at the contract rate, without abatement or deduction, shall be and become due and payable on the day of the discharge or refusal to longer employ and the servant or employee may request in writing of his foreman or the keeper of his time to have the money due him, or a valid check therefor, sent to any station or office where a regular agent is kept; and if the money or a valid check therefor, does not reach the station or office within seven days from the date it is so requested, then as a penalty for such nonpayment the wages of the servant or employee shall continue from the date of the discharge or refusal to further employ, at the same rate until paid; provided, such wages shall not continue more than sixty days. This section shall not apply in the case of an employee whose remuneration for work is based primarily on commissions and whose duties include collection of accounts, care of a stock or merchandise and similar activities and where an audit is necessary or customary in order to determine the net amount due.

290.120. Employee not entitled to benefits, when. – No such servant or employee who secretes or absents himself to avoid payment to him, or refuses to receive the same when fully tendered, shall be entitled to any benefit under sections 290.110 and 290.120 for such time as he so avoids payment.

290.130. Action by employees for breach of employment contract. – Any such servant or employee whose employment is for a definite period of time, and who is discharged without cause before the expiration of such time, may, in addition to the penalty prescribed by this law, have an action against any such employer for any damages he may have sustained by reason of such wrongful discharge, and such action may be joined with an action for unpaid wages and penalty.

290.140. Letter of dismissal, when – failure to issue, damages – punitive damages, limitations. – 1. Whenever any employee of any corporation doing business in this state and which employs seven or more employees, who shall have been in the service of said corporation for a period of at least ninety days, shall be discharged or voluntarily quit the service of such corporation and who thereafter within a reasonable period of time, but not later than one year following the date the employee was discharged or voluntarily quit, requests in writing by certified mail to the superintendent, manager or registered agent of said corporation, with specific reference to the statute, it shall be the duty of the superintendent or manager of said corporation to issue to such employee, within forty-five days after the receipt of such request, a letter, duly signed by such superintendent or manager, setting forth the nature and character of service rendered by such employee to such corporation and the duration thereof, and truly stating for what cause, if any, such employee was discharged or voluntarily quit such service.

2. Any corporation which violates the provisions of subsection 1 of this section shall be liable for compensatory but not punitive damages but in the event that the evidence establishes that the employer did not issue the request letter, said employer may be liable for nominal and punitive damages; but no award of punitive damages under this section shall be based upon the content of any such letter.

290.145. Discrimination, refusal to hire or discharge employee for alcohol or tobacco use not during working hours, prohibited, exception – not cause for legal actions. – It shall be an improper employment practice for an employer to refuse to hire, or to discharge, any individual, or to otherwise disadvantage any individual, with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment because the individual uses lawful alcohol or tobacco products off the premises of the employer during hours such individual is not working for the employer, unless such use interferes with the duties and performance of the employee, the employee's coworkers, or the overall operation of the employer's business; except that, nothing in this section shall prohibit an employer from providing or contracting for health insurance benefits at a reduced premium rate or at a reduced deductible level for employees who do not smoke or use tobacco products. Religious organizations and church-operated institutions, and not-for-profit organizations whose principal business is health care promotion shall be exempt from the provisions of this section. The provisions of this section shall not be deemed to create a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages or other relief.

290.152. Employer response to request for information about current or former employee, contents, requirements, civil immunity, when. – 1. As used in this section, the following terms shall mean:

(1) "Employer", any individual, organization, partnership, political subdivision, corporation or other legal entity which has or had in the entity's employ one or more individuals performing services for the entity within this state;

(2) "Prospective employer", any employer, as defined in this subsection, to which an individual has made application for employment, either oral or written, or forwarded a resume or other correspondence expressing an interest in employment.

2. An employer may:

(1) Respond in writing to a written request concerning a current or former employee from an entity or person which the employer reasonably believes to be a prospective employer of such employee; and

(2) Disclose the nature and character of service rendered by such employee to such employer and the duration thereof; and

(3) Truly state for what cause, if any, such employee was discharged or voluntarily quit such service.

The provisions of this section shall apply regardless of whether the employee becomes employed by the prospective employer prior to receipt of the former employer's written response. The information provided pursuant to this section shall be consistent with the content of any service letter provided pursuant to section 290.140 for the same employee.

3. The employer shall send a copy of any letter provided pursuant to subsection 2 of this section to the current employee or former employee at the employee's last known address. The current or former employee may request from the employer a copy of the letter provided pursuant to subsection 2 of this section for up to one year following the date of such letter.

4. For purposes of this section, an employer shall be immune from civil liability for any response made pursuant to this section or for any consequences of such response, unless such response was false and made with knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard for whether such response was true or false.

5. Any employer who violates the provisions of subsection 2 of this section shall be liable for compensatory damages but not punitive damages.

6. Any letter issued pursuant to this section shall not be admitted as evidence in an unemployment compensation claim.