

Dartmouth

“Lunch Hours” and Meal Breaks

This issue most often arises in the context of employees wishing to shorten their workday, either by decreasing their “lunch hour” from 60 to 30 minutes, or by omitting it entirely. Dartmouth College has no specific policies regarding “lunch hours” and meal breaks for its employees. However, there is a New Hampshire state law (NH RSA 275:30-a) which addresses the subject, and it states as follows:

“An employer may not require an employee to work more than 5 consecutive hours without granting him a ½ hour lunch or eating period, except if it is feasible for the employee to eat during the performance of his work, and the employer permits him to do so.”

Subject to the requirements of the law, the first obligation is to satisfy the business and program needs of the College. With that in mind, managers and their employees should work together to create a meal break schedule which meets the needs of the workplace while accommodating the reasonable wishes of the employee. If you have any questions about these matters, please contact your Human Resources Consultant.

Related document:

“Hours of Work”, Employment Policies and Procedures Manual
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hrs/pdfs/Hours_of_Work.pdf

Contact your HR Consultant if you have any questions.

