

Labor Regulations and Standards - Georgia

Working Hours, Leave Policies, and Contract Termination

This document provides a detailed overview of the core labor regulations in Georgia, as stipulated by the **Labor Code of Georgia (2023 Revision)**. It is intended to guide employers on standards concerning working hours, various types of leave, and the legal procedures for contract termination.

Working Hours

The regulation of working hours in Georgia is designed to ensure employee well-being and prevent exploitation, while providing a clear framework for both employers and employees.

Maximum Weekly Hours

The standard working week in Georgia is legally defined as **40 hours**, typically distributed over a five-day period, equating to eight hours per day. For employees working in hazardous or dangerous conditions, the maximum weekly working time is reduced to **36 hours**. The specific distribution of daily hours must be outlined in the employment contract or the internal company regulations. Any arrangement that exceeds these limits without following overtime protocols is considered a violation of the Labor Code.

Overtime

Overtime work is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and with the employee's consent, unless otherwise specified in a collective bargaining agreement. The regulations on overtime are strict to protect employees from excessive work.

- **Overtime Limits:** An employee cannot work more than **four hours** of overtime in any 48-hour period and no more than **120 hours** per calendar year. These limits are established to safeguard the health and safety of the workforce.
- **Overtime Compensation:** All hours worked beyond the standard 40-hour week must be compensated at a premium rate. The mandatory overtime compensation is **125%** of the employee's standard hourly wage. Alternatively, by mutual agreement, overtime can be compensated with paid time off in lieu.

Night Work and Weekends

Work performed during non-standard hours is subject to specific regulations and compensation models.

- **Night Work:** Any work performed between **10:00 PM and 6:00 AM** is classified as night work. Employees engaged in night work are entitled to a wage premium of at least **115%** of their regular hourly rate for the hours worked during this period. Pregnant women, new mothers, and employees with children under three years of age are prohibited from performing night work without their explicit written consent.
- **Weekend Work:** Work on Saturdays and Sundays is generally discouraged and should only be required when operationally essential. If an employee is required to work on a designated rest day, they must be compensated at the overtime rate of **125%** or be granted an alternative rest day within the following two weeks.

Probation Period

The probation period allows both the employer and the employee to assess their suitability for the role and the work environment before committing to a long-term professional relationship.

Maximum Legal Duration

The maximum duration for a probationary period as stipulated by the Labor Code is **six months**. This period must be explicitly stated in the written employment contract. If the contract does not specify a probation period, the employee is considered to be hired on a permanent basis from the first day of employment. The probation period cannot be extended beyond the six-month limit.

Conditions and Rights During the Period

During the probation period, employees are entitled to all the same rights and protections as regular employees. This includes the right to the minimum wage, social security coverage, protection against discrimination, and adherence to standard working hours. They accrue annual leave and are entitled to sick leave under the same conditions as other staff members.

Termination During Probation Period

Either the employer or the employee may terminate the employment contract during the probation period with a simplified procedure. The required notice period for termination during this time is **three business days**. The party initiating the termination is not required to provide a detailed justification, but the termination cannot be based on discriminatory grounds.

Annual Leave

Employees are entitled to paid annual leave to ensure they receive adequate rest and recuperation.

Minimum Mandatory Days

Every employee has the right to a minimum of **24 working days** of paid annual leave per year after completing eleven months of continuous service with an employer. For employees in hazardous jobs or those under 18 years of age, the minimum entitlement is extended to **30 working days**.

Accumulation and Usage

Annual leave is accrued on a pro-rata basis. Employees are expected to take their leave within the calendar year it is accrued. An employer must grant the leave according to a pre-approved schedule, taking into account both the employee's preference and the operational needs of the company. By mutual agreement, a portion of the leave can be carried over to the next year, but it must be used within the first six months of that year.

Financial Compensation

It is illegal for an employer to provide financial compensation in lieu of the minimum mandatory annual leave, except upon termination of the employment contract. If an employee's contract is terminated, they must be paid for all accrued but unused vacation days.

National Public Holidays

Georgia observes several national and religious holidays during which employees are entitled to a paid day off.

List of Official Holidays

The following are the officially recognized public holidays in Georgia:

1	1	January 1 & 2 - New Year's Day
2	2	January 7 - Orthodox Christmas Day
3	3	January 19 - Epiphany/Baptism Day
4	4	March 3 - Mother's Day
5	5	April 9 - Day of National Unity
6	6	Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday, and Easter Monday (variable dates)
7	7	May 9 - Victory Day over Fascism
8	8	May 12 - Saint Andrew the First-Called Day
9	9	May 26 - Independence Day
10	10	August 28 - Saint Mary's Day (Mariamoba)
11	11	October 14 - Svetitskhovloba
12	12	November 23 - Saint George's Day (Giorgoba)

Compensation for Working on Holidays

If an employee is required to work on a public holiday due to operational necessities, they must be compensated at a premium rate of **150%** of their standard wage or be granted an alternative paid day off, as agreed upon between the employer and employee.

Special Leave

In addition to annual leave, employees are entitled to special paid leave for specific personal circumstances.

- **Sick Leave:** Employees are entitled to paid sick leave for up to **20 calendar days** per year. A medical certificate from a licensed practitioner is required if the absence exceeds three consecutive days. The employer covers the payment for the first 10 days, after which the Social Service Agency may provide benefits.
- **Maternity/Paternity Leave:** Female employees are entitled to **183 calendar days** of paid maternity leave (200 days in case of complications or multiple births). Paternity leave is granted for **10 working days**, to be taken within the first month after the child's birth.

- **Bereavement Leave:** In the event of the death of a close family member (spouse, child, parent, or sibling), an employee is entitled to **three working days** of paid leave.

Contract Termination

The termination of an employment contract is strictly regulated by the Labor Code to protect employees from unfair dismissal.

Justified Causes

An employer may terminate a contract for justified reasons, which include:

- **Gross Misconduct:** Actions such as theft, fraud, or violence in the workplace.
- **Repeated Underperformance:** Failure to meet job requirements after documented warnings and opportunities for improvement.
- **Redundancy:** Economic reasons, technological changes, or reorganization leading to the elimination of the position.
- **End of a Fixed-Term Contract:** The natural conclusion of a contract for a specific period or project.
- **Mutual Agreement:** Both parties agree in writing to end the employment relationship.

Notice Periods

The legally required minimum notice period depends on the employee's length of service and the reason for termination.

- **Termination by Employer (for cause):** At least **30 calendar days** written notice.
- **Termination by Employee (resignation):** At least **30 calendar days** written notice.
- **Redundancy:** At least **30 calendar days** written notice and consultation with employee representatives if applicable.

Severance Pay

Employees terminated due to redundancy or liquidation of the company are entitled to severance pay. The minimum legal requirement is **one month's salary** for each completed year of service with the employer, with a minimum payment of one month's salary.

Benefits Settlement

Upon termination, the employer must settle all outstanding payments on the employee's final day of work. This includes the final salary, payment for any accrued and unused annual leave, and any other contractually agreed-upon benefits or bonuses.

Legal Notice: This document contains synthetic information generated for technical demonstration purposes. It does not constitute legal advice. For official information, please consult the labor authorities of Georgia.