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## Question of the Week

July 10, 2024

### Question

When are we required to pay for trainings?

### ANSWER

In general, time spent in job-related training is counted as time worked and must be paid. However, not every lecture, class, training program, or similar activity would qualify. If all four of the following criteria are met, you don't need to pay the employee for the training:

1. The training occurs outside of the employee's normal work hours
2. The training is completely voluntary (there will be no company-initiated consequences if the employee does not attend)
3. The training is not specifically job related (it may be tangentially related to their job, like most continuing education, without being specific to how they do their job on a day-to-day basis or intended to train them for new job duties)
4. No work for the employer is performed during the training (e.g., reading or replying to emails).

For example, if a software developer wants to learn a new coding language that isn't even used in the workplace and enrolls in a local college class that meets in the evenings after work, that wouldn't need to be paid. On the other hand, if a graphic designer needs to learn a new piece of software because it will be used for future work projects, that *would* need to be paid.

*This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.*