

PART I ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT
(Chapters 1 through 182)

TITLE XXI LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

CHAPTER 149 LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

Section 148 Payment of wages; commissions; exemption by contract; persons deemed employers; provision for cashing check or draft; violation of statute

Section 148. Every person having employees in his service shall pay weekly or bi-weekly each such employee the wages earned by him to within six days of the termination of the pay period during which the wages were earned if employed for five or six days in a calendar week, or to within seven days of the termination of the pay period during which the wages were earned if such employee is employed seven days in a calendar week, or in the case of an employee who has worked for a period of less than five days, hereinafter called a casual employee, shall, within seven days after the termination of such period, pay the wages earned by such casual employee during such period, but any employee leaving his employment shall be paid in full on the following regular pay day, and, in the absence of a regular pay day, on the following Saturday; and any employee discharged from such employment shall be paid in full on the day of his discharge, or in Boston as soon as the laws requiring pay rolls, bills and accounts to be certified shall have been complied with; and the commonwealth, its departments, officers, boards and commissions shall so pay every mechanic, workman and laborer employed by it or them, and every person employed in any other capacity by it or them in any penal or charitable institution, and every county and city shall so pay every employee engaged in its business the wages or salary earned by him, unless such mechanic, workman, laborer or employee requests in writing to be paid in a different manner; and every town shall so pay each employee engaged in its business if so required by him; but an employee absent from his regular place of labor at a time fixed for payment shall be paid thereafter on demand; provided, however, that the department of telecommunications and energy, after hearing, may authorize a railroad corporation or a parlor or sleeping car corporation to pay the wages of any of its employees less frequently than weekly, if such employees prefer less frequent payments, and if their interests and the interests of the public will not suffer thereby; and provided, further, that employees engaged in a bona fide executive, administrative or professional capacity as determined by the attorney general and employees whose salaries are regularly paid on a weekly basis or at a weekly rate for a work week of substantially the same number of hours from week to week may be paid bi-weekly or semi-monthly unless such employee elects at his own option to be paid monthly; and provided, further, that employees engaged in agricultural work may be paid their wages monthly; in either case, however, failure by a railroad corporation or a parlor or sleeping car corporation to pay its employees their wages as authorized by the said department, or by an employer of employees engaged in agricultural work to pay monthly the wages of his or her employees, shall be deemed a violation of this section; and provided, further, that an employer may make payment of wages prior to the time that they are required to be paid under the provisions of this section, and such wages together with any wages already earned and due under this section, if any, may be paid weekly, bi-weekly, or semi-monthly to a salaried employee, but in no event shall wages remain unpaid by an employer for more than six days from the termination of the pay period in which such wages were earned by the employee. For the purposes of this section the words salaried employee shall mean any employee whose remuneration is on a weekly, bi-weekly, semi-monthly, monthly or annual basis, even though deductions or increases may be made in a particular pay period. The word "wages" shall include any holiday or vacation payments due an employee under an oral or written agreement. An employer, when paying an employee his wage, shall furnish to such employee a suitable pay slip, check stub or envelope showing the name of the employer, the name of the employee, the day, month, year, number of hours worked, and hourly rate, and the amounts of deductions or increases made for the pay period.

Compensation paid to public and non-public school teachers shall be deemed to be fully earned at the end of the school year, and proportionately earned during the school year; provided, however, that payment of such compensation may be deferred to the extent that equal payments may be established for a 12 month period including amounts payable in July and August subsequent to the end of the school year.

Every railroad corporation shall furnish each employee with a statement accompanying each payment of wages listing current accrued total earnings and taxes and shall also furnish said employee with each such payment a listing of his daily

wages and the method used to compute such wages.

This section shall apply, so far as apt, to the payment of commissions when the amount of such commissions, less allowable or authorized deductions, has been definitely determined and has become due and payable to such employee, and commissions so determined and due such employees shall be subject to the provisions of section one hundred and fifty.

This section shall not apply to an employee of a hospital which is supported in part by contributions from the commonwealth or from any city or town, nor to an employee of an incorporated hospital which provides treatment to patients free of charge, or which is conducted as a public charity, unless such employee requests such hospital to pay him weekly. This section shall not apply to an employee of a co-operative association if he is a shareholder therein, unless he requests such association to pay him weekly, nor to casual employees as hereinbefore defined employed by the commonwealth or by any county, city or town.

No person shall by a special contract with an employee or by any other means exempt himself from this section or from section one hundred and fifty. The president and treasurer of a corporation and any officers or agents having the management of such corporation shall be deemed to be the employers of the employees of the corporation within the meaning of this section. Every public officer whose duty it is to pay money, approve, audit or verify pay rolls, or perform any other official act relative to payment of any public employees, shall be deemed to be an employer of such employees, and shall be responsible under this section for any failure to perform his official duty relative to the payment of their wages or salaries, unless he is prevented from performing the same through no fault on his part.

Any employer paying wages to an employee by check or draft shall provide for such employee such facilities for the cashing of such check or draft at a bank or elsewhere, without charge by deduction from the face amount thereof or otherwise, as shall be deemed by the attorney general to be reasonable. The state treasurer may in his discretion in writing exempt himself and any other public officer from the provisions of this paragraph.

An employer paying his employees on a weekly basis on July first, nineteen hundred and ninety-two shall, prior to paying said employees on a bi-weekly basis, provide each employee with written notice of such change at least ninety days in advance of the first such bi-weekly paycheck.

Whoever violates this section shall be punished or shall be subject to a civil citation or order as provided in section 27C.

PART I ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT
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TITLE XXI LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

CHAPTER 149 LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

Section 150 Complaint for violation of certain sections; defenses; payment after complaint; assignments; loan of wages to employer; civil action

Section 150. The attorney general may make complaint or seek indictment against any person for a violation of section 148. On the trial no defence for failure to pay as required, other than the attachment of such wages by trustee process or a valid assignment thereof or a valid set-off against the same, or the absence of the employee from his regular place of labor at the time of payment, or an actual tender to such employee at the time of payment of the wages so earned by him, shall be valid. The defendant shall not set up as a defence a payment of wages after the bringing of the complaint. An assignment of future wages payable weekly under section one hundred and forty-eight shall not be valid if made to the person from whom such wages are to become due or to any person on his behalf, or if made or procured to be made to another person for the purpose of relieving the employer from the obligation to pay weekly. A loan made by an employee to his employer of wages which are payable weekly under section one hundred and forty-eight, whether made directly to the employer or to another person or persons on his behalf, shall not be valid as a defense on the trial of a complaint for failure to pay such wages weekly, unless such loan shall have been made with the approval of the attorney general.

An employee claiming to be aggrieved by a violation of sections 33E, 148, 148A, 148B, 150C, 152, 152A or 159C or section 19 of chapter 151 may, 90 days after the filing of a complaint with the attorney general, or sooner if the attorney general assents in writing, and within 3 years after the violation, institute and prosecute in his own name and on his own behalf, or for himself and for others similarly situated, a civil action for injunctive relief, for any damages incurred, and for any lost wages and other benefits. An employee so aggrieved who prevails in such an action shall be awarded treble damages, as liquidated damages, for any lost wages and other benefits and shall also be awarded the costs of the litigation and reasonable attorneys' fees.