

Bits & Briefs

Israeli Labor and Employment Law | Special Series | 28 February 2019

In our "Bits & Briefs" Special Series dedicated to [Israeli Labor and Employment Law](#), we provide periodic bite-sized updates introducing key provisions of Israeli labor law and their practical implications, particularly from the perspective of businesses looking to operate in, or expand to, Israel. In this update we will cover some of the basic rights granted to employees in Israel regarding weekly rest.

Weekly Rest

Bit #1: According to Israeli employment law, employers are prohibited from employing workers on their weekly rest day, unless the employer receives a special permit from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Bit #2: The weekly rest is 36 consecutive hours. Under certain circumstances, it is possible to shorten the weekly rest to 25 consecutive hours for shift workers.

Bit #3: For Jewish workers - the weekly rest is Saturday (i.e., from the time the Sabbath begins on Friday evening according to Jewish law and until Saturday evening. The exact time varies depending on the time of sunset.)

Bit #4: For non-Jewish workers - the weekly rest day is Friday, Saturday or Sunday, as is customary for the employee. Therefore, workplaces that operate all week long subject to a permit can employ non-Jewish workers on the Sabbath without violating the law and without applying for a permit.

Practical Implications:

- Employees are entitled to notify the employer upon beginning of employment that they do not agree to work on weekly rest days in accordance with their religious beliefs, and the employer is prohibited from discriminating against the employee by denying employment on this account.
- Having an employee work on rest days without a permit is a criminal offense, which in certain cases may result in fines imposed on the officers and managers of the employer.
- In addition, an employee working on a rest day is entitled to receive 150% of employee's normal salary.
- Multinational corporations looking to operate or expand in Israel should also take into account the effect of the restrictions on employment during weekly rest days on the production capacity of the employing company.

We are happy to assist you in providing legal advice in relation to each of these issues, their ramifications for the workplace and the practical steps that may be taken as a result.

Sincerely,

Fischer Behar Chen Well Orion & Co.

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