



Working hours are limited in fixed-term employment relationships too

Employers must ensure that their employees' working hours do not exceed the maximum permitted amount. This also applies to fixed-term employment contracts.

The average working time cannot go over 48 hours per week during an adjustment period. In short employment relationships, this is calculated in relation to the duration of the employment relationship.

The maximum amount of working hours sets the upper limit for an employee's total working hours. It includes all hours worked, no matter whether they constitute regular hours, additional work or overtime.

Employers must actively and systematically monitor their employees' working hours. Only actual hours worked should be recorded in working time records. Working time records and payroll records must be kept separate.

Employers must actively monitor that maximum working hours are not exceeded.

The provision on maximum working hours is intended to protect employees' safety and health.

Working too-long hours can cause workload that is harmful to health and increase the risk of accidents. Violating the provision is a punishable offence.



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The ceiling for total working hours applies to all work regardless of how working hours are organised, i.e. general working hours, period-based working hours, flexible working hours schemes and flexible working time arrangements.

What is an adjustment period?

Under the Working Hours Act, the rule of thumb is that employees' total working hours, including any overtime, must not exceed an average of 48 hours per week over a four-month period. Each of these four-month adjustment periods are treated as separate entities.



A national collective agreement can be used to extend the adjustment period to 6 or 12 months. Check the correct adjustment period in the collective agreement of your field.

If a workplace uses period-based working hours, it should be noted that the adjustment period for period-based work is separate from the adjustment period for maximum working hours. Legislation does not comment on the sectioning of period-based work when calculating the maximum number of working hours.

How to calculate maximum working hours in a fixed-term employment relationship

The hours of any temporary workers must be monitored as of the beginning of their contract.

If an employment relationship has been agreed to be shorter than the adjustment period (4, 6 or 12 months), the maximum working hours must be proportional to the length of the employment relationship. In other words, the maximum number of working hours is checked according to the length of the employment contract period.

Example

The length of the employment relationship has been agreed to be six weeks. The employer must ensure that the average working hours do not exceed 48 hours per week during the adjustment period, which is six weeks in this case.

During this period, the employee works for a total of 285 hours. The average working time is calculated by dividing the total working hours by six, i.e. $285 \text{ h} / 6 = 47.5 \text{ h}$.

The average working time does not exceed the maximum amount.

What if a fixed-term employment relationship ends unexpectedly and suddenly before the end of the adjustment period? The employer has planned the amount of working hours on the assumption that the employment relationship will continue as agreed and that the working hours will be adjusted during the review period.

In these situations, it is not possible to carry out the aforementioned adjustment. However, the working hours must be adjusted before the end of the employment relationship if possible, for example during the notice period.

In addition, the Working Hours Act and the collective agreement and their provisions on the compensation of working hours in such cases must be taken into account.

Remember rest periods!

When calculating maximum working hours, the shortest possible period is one week. The calculation rule does not limit shift lengths or the amount of overtime in employment relationships that are shorter than that.

It is however important to still remember the daily and weekly rest periods laid down in the Working Hours Act and the collective agreement in these cases as well.

More information

> [Website of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Tyosuojelu.fi: Employment relationship > Maximum number of working hours](#)



> The occupational safety and health authority's telephone service is available at +358 295 016 620.

[Tyosuojelu.fi/telephone-service](https://tyosuojelu.fi/telephone-service)

