

LUNCH BREAKS NOT ENSURED



A recent ruling from the California Supreme Court will be affecting millions of both businesses and employees in recent months.

The new ruling states that employers are not obligated to make sure that their employees take the mandatory lunch breaks. This opinion was made after an attorney for employees made an argument stating that employers often take advantage of their employees during the busiest hours. This case actually was first filed nearly a decade ago and was originally against Brinker International, which is based in Dallas and is a parent company for the popular chain restaurant, Chili's, along with several other eateries. The case was first filed because employees complained about missing their lunch break and that it was a violation of the labor law in the state of California. However, the ruling was made in favor of different businesses, saying that the companies are required to provide lunch breaks to workers but that it is the workers responsibility to decide whether or not they want to take their lunch break or continue working. As long as businesses follow the law and allow for employees to have a lunch break, they are basically doing no wrong, in the opinion of the court. Associate Justice, Kathryn Werdegar, says that the law does not say that employers have to make sure that all employees stop working during their lunch break and that it is simply not their responsibility. The employer's responsibility is to make sure that workers are provided with a 30-minute break for lunch, which they get to choose whether or not they will take. The rest break part of the lawsuit will, however, be moving forward and many are satisfied because of it. A former employee of Chili's, Adam Hohnbaum, who worked as a bartender in the restaurant, says he worked there for over five years and is excited that the court will be going forward with the rest break part of the lawsuit. He said that during his time working at the restaurant, he hardly got a break or even a period to rest and chill for a few minutes. It simply was not part of the operation. He hopes that because more attention is being brought to the whole aspect of getting a break that the working conditions will improve for present and future employees of these different chain restaurants and employees of other different businesses as well. Right now, it is unclear of the future for different class-action lawsuits on this particular issue because the meal brake violation claim that was made by the employees was not dismissed and instead, it was sent back for more arguing to take place on the particular subject.

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