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Upstate hospital workers sue for lunch money

Employees at St. Joe's, Crouse want law followed

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SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) -- Lawyers handling federal class action lawsuits say thousands of employees at three upstate New York hospitals could be owed millions in overtime pay for working through their lunch breaks.

They say the affected workers will soon get court-authorized notices in the mail and have until Sept. 15 to join the suits.

The lawsuits filed in November claim St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center and Crouse Hospital in Syracuse and Faxton-St. Luke's Healthcare in Utica have practices and policies that automatically deduct hourly workers' lunch breaks from their pay, even when they work during those breaks caring for patients.

Federal law requires paying the employees for all of the time they work.

Officials at the hospitals had no immediate comment Wednesday.

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