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Millions of 'White-Collar' Workers to Start Getting Overtime Pay Under Obama Executive Order

By [Leonardo Blair](#)

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Millions of workers currently deemed ineligible for overtime pay under a federal regulation known as the "white-collar exemption" might soon be able to pocket more for their labor under an executive order President Barack Obama is expected to sign on Thursday.

A report in [The New York Times](#) said President Obama will direct the Labor Department to revise its regulations to require that employers pay overtime to "several million" workers currently classified as "executive or professional."

These workers are highlighted as fast-food managers, loan officers, computer technicians and others who employers have classified as such to avoid paying overtime while their profits soar.

The [Associated Press](#) said the changes to the regulations are expected to increase the threshold for overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act. It currently only guarantees extra pay to salaried workers asked to work overtime if they earn under \$455 weekly.

President George W. Bush's administration was persuaded by business groups in 2004 to allow them greater latitude to exempt salaried white-collar workers from overtime pay despite objections from organized labor, according to the Times.

Some conservatives are not supportive of the president's pending move.

"There's no such thing as a free lunch," Daniel Mitchell, a senior fellow with the Cato Institute, told the Times, warning that employers might cut pay or use fewer workers. "If they push through something to make a certain class of workers more expensive, something will happen to adjust."

Cecilia Muñoz, the director of the White House Domestic Policy Council said, however, that Obama's decision was a part of his effort to help workers thrive.

"We need to fix the system so folks working hard are getting compensated fairly," she said Tuesday. "That's why we are jump-starting this effort."