WORKTIME RESEARCH 2026

EMPLOYEE OVERTIME STATISTICS: A GLOBAL STUDY OF AFTER-HOURS WORK 2026

A data-driven study of computer-based overtime across countries, company sizes, and management styles.

Explore interactive data online

NON-INVASIVE MONITORING

WORKTIME

26+ YEARS

INSIDE THIS RESEARCH

ABOUT THE WORKTIME RESEARCH 2024-2025 STUDY

This study is part of the **WorkTime Research 2026 series** - an ongoing set of reports focused on how employee time is actually used in modern workplaces.

The research examines **computer-based overtime only**, analyzing work activity that takes place outside standard working hours.

The analysis covers the period **2024–2025** and is based on **anonymized, aggregated global data** collected across multiple industries and regions.

Offline overtime activities - such as meetings, phone calls, or other non-computer-based work - are **not included** in this report and will be addressed in a separate upcoming study.

WorkTime provides workforce analytics to **thousands of companies and hundreds of thousands of employees worldwide,** providing broad data for identifying workplace trends across industries and regions.

Privacy is maintained throughout the research process. All WorkTime Research data is **100% anonymized and aggregated,** with no employees, companies, or personal information identified.

Study period
January 2024 - December 2025

Countries analyzed
Australia, Canada, India,
South Africa, UK, USA

Data source
WorkTime customers
across multiple industries

Data safety
100% anonymized and
privacy-compliant

Global reach
4,000 companies
11,000 employees

WHAT THIS STUDY MEASURES

Overtime is measured as **computer activity outside scheduled work hours**.

Work performed outside standard working hours

This category captures computer activity that occurs beyond an employee's scheduled working hours. It reflects actual overtime work rather than contractual hours, showing when employees continue working outside the expected time frame.

Early starts, late evenings, weekends

The study analyzes overtime occurring before the start of the workday, after regular hours in the evening, and during weekends. This helps identify when extended work most often takes place and whether overtime is distributed evenly or concentrated in specific time windows.

Daily, weekly, and monthly overtime patterns

Overtime is examined across different time scales to reveal recurring patterns. Daily data shows short-term behavior, weekly trends highlight workload accumulation, and monthly analysis helps identify sustained overtime and long-term pressure.

After-hours activity concentration

This metric shows how overtime is distributed within non-working hours. It highlights whether after-hours work is spread out or clustered around specific periods, such as late evenings or early mornings, indicating potential workload imbalance or operational inefficiencies.

WHY OVERTIME MATTERS

Overtime ≠ productivity

More hours do not equal better results.

Chronic overtime signals workload imbalance.

Frequent overwork indicates systemic issues.

After-hours work increases burnout risk

Sustained late work raises exhaustion and turnover.

Overtime patterns reflect management quality

High overtime can indicate poor leadership practices.

Overtime is not an achievement - it is an operational signal.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

38%

Employees work overtime regularly

Employees show computer activity outside standard working hours on a regular basis.

EVENINGS & WEEKENDS

Peak overtime periods

Most overtime occurs in late evenings and during weekends.

OVERTIME ≠ PRODUCTIVITY

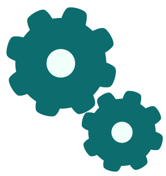
Hours don't equal results

Extended hours do not correlate with higher productive output.

CHRONIC OVERTIME

Signals workload imbalance

Persistent after-hours work points to planning and resource issues.



MANAGEMENT MATTERS

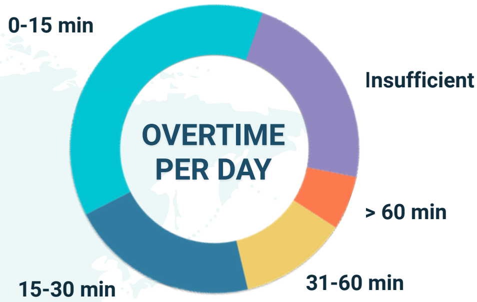
Overtime patterns vary by management style

Teams with highly engaged managers show healthier overtime distribution and less unproductive after-hours work.

GLOBAL OVERVIEW

Globally, an average working day is divided as follows:

- **25%** of employees 0-15 minutes overtime per day
- **14%** of employees 15-30 minutes overtime per day
- **8%** of employees 31-60 minutes overtime per day
- **4%** of employees >60 minutes overtime per day
- **15%** of insufficient working time < 8 hours

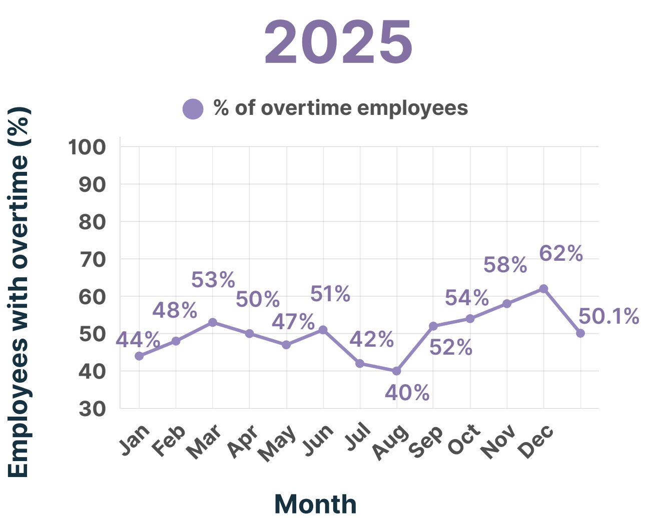


Overtime is not uniform across the workforce. A significant share of employees spend **less than 15 minutes** per day working outside standard hours, indicating occasional or situational overtime rather than sustained pressure.

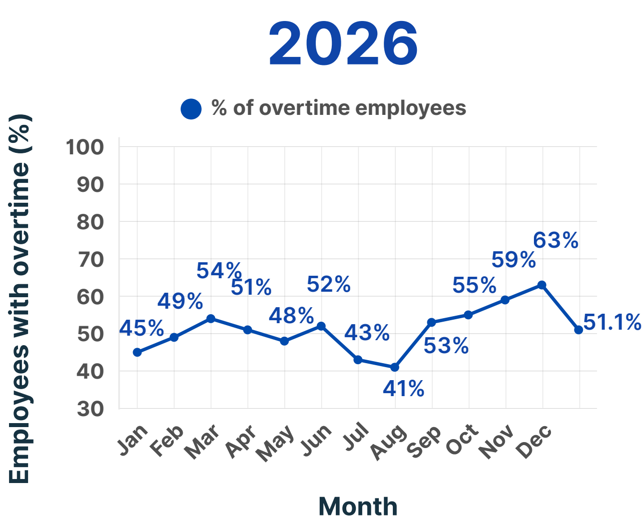
At the same time, a smaller but clearly identifiable group of employees works **15–30 minutes, 31–60 minutes, or more than 60 minutes** of overtime per day. While these groups represent a minority, they account for a disproportionate share of total overtime hours.

Employees with over 30 minutes of daily overtime tend to show recurring after-hours activity rather than isolated incidents. This pattern suggests structural workload concentration, where extended hours become part of the routine instead of a temporary adjustment.

Monthly overtime (average per employee, 2024–2025)



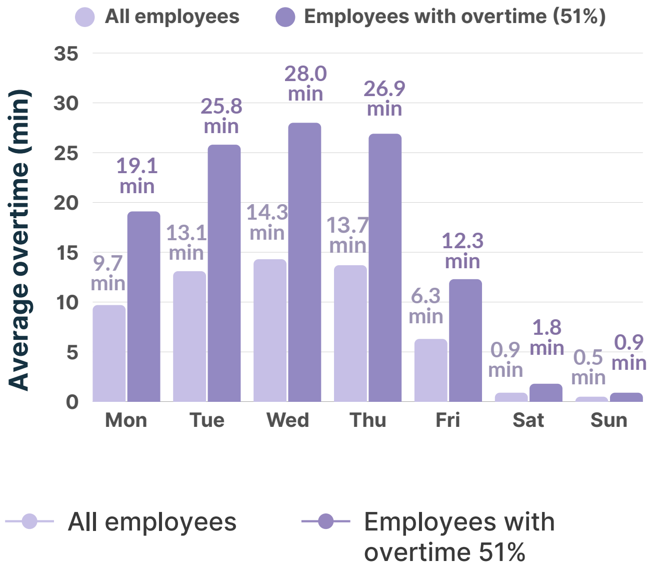
Annual average • 2025 **50.1%**



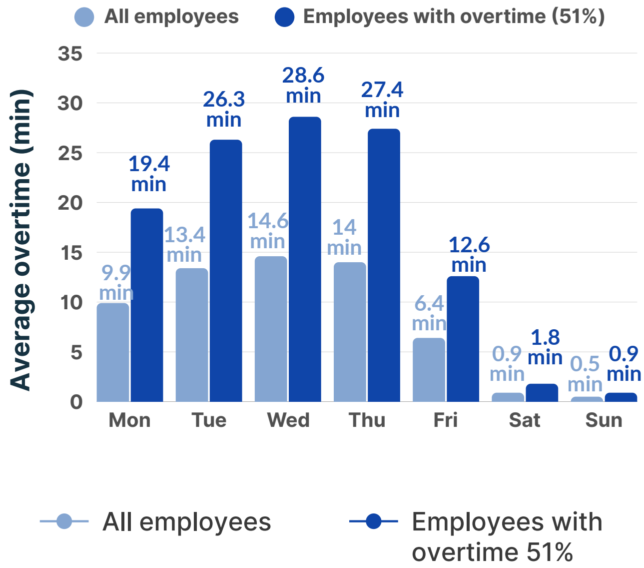
Annual average • 2026 **51.1%**

Daily overtime (average per employee/day, 2024–2025)

2025



2026



Weekday average (Mon-Fri)	11.4 min All employees	22.4 min Employees with overtime 51%	11.7 min All employees	22.9 min Employees with overtime 51%
7-day average	8.4 min All employees	16.4 min Employees with overtime 51%	8.5 min All employees	16.7 min Employees with overtime 51%

PER COUNTRY

Time	Australia	Canada	India	South Africa	UK	USA
Before hours	36%	38%	42%	45%	35%	40%
Lunch	34%	36%	40%	43%	33%	37%
After hours	40%	42%	46%	49%	39%	44%
Weekends	36%	38%	42%	45%	35%	40%

Key insight

South Africa shows the **highest overtime** levels across all time periods, with after-hours work reaching 49%.

PER COMPANY SIZE

	Employees			
Time	1-50	51–200	201–1000	1000+
Before hours	36%	38%	41%	43%
Lunch	33%	35%	38%	40%
After hours	40%	42%	45%	47%
Weekends	35%	37%	40%	42%

Key insight

Larger companies show more overtime, with after-hours work reaching 47% among companies with 1,000+ employees.

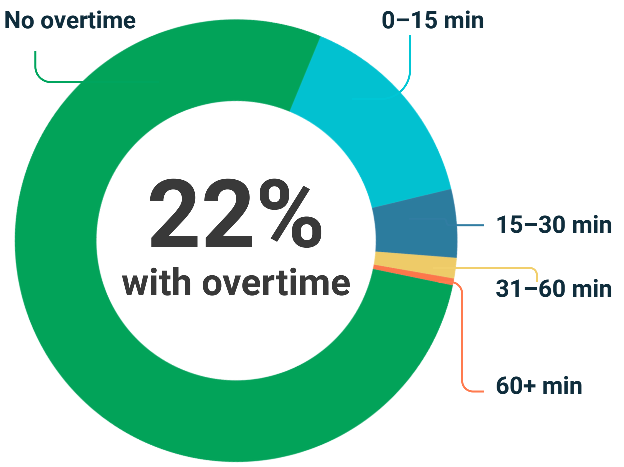
PER MANAGEMENT STYLE

Overtime is not just an employee behavior. It is often a management outcome. The charts below compare typical overtime patterns under three different management styles, making it easy to see how manager engagement influences overtime.
Each chart shows the typical overtime pattern under a different management style, making it easy to compare the impact of manager engagement.

Highly engaged managers

Highly engaged managers use overtime reports to identify workload imbalances early and keep overtime under control.

The chart below illustrates the overtime patterns typically seen under a highly engaged manager.



Regular reviews help managers identify workload imbalances early, keeping overtime low and preventing burnout and unnecessary labor costs.

- Employees with no overtime: **78%**
- 0–15 minutes overtime: **15%**
- 15–30 minutes overtime: **5%**
- 31–60 minutes overtime: **1.5%**
- More than 60 minutes overtime: **0.5%**

Most employees finish their work within scheduled hours. When overtime occurs, it is usually brief, indicating that workload imbalances are identified and addressed early.

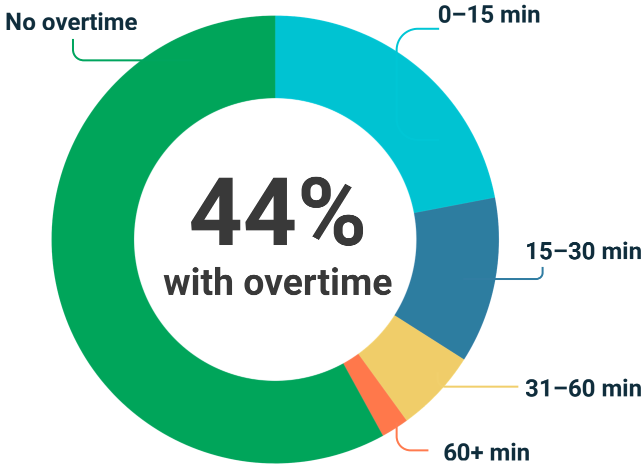
Consistent workload monitoring helps managers resolve issues before overtime becomes a recurring problem.

Moderately engaged managers

Moderately engaged managers review overtime reports from time to time but do not consistently act on emerging workload trends. As a result, overtime is generally under control, although some employees regularly work beyond their scheduled hours. Typical overtime patterns under a moderately engaged manager are shown below.

This team experiences moderate levels of overtime because workload reviews are less consistent and adjustments are often made only after overtime begins to increase.

- Employees with no overtime: **58%**
- 0–15 minutes overtime: **22%**
- 15–30 minutes overtime: **15%**
- 31–60 minutes overtime: **6%**
- More than 60 minutes overtime: **2%**



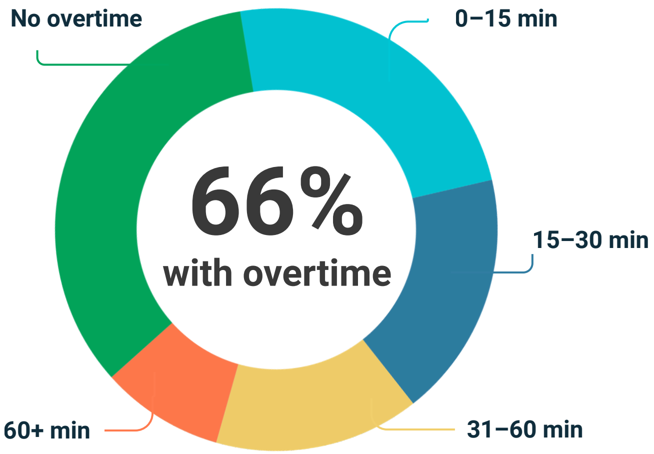
Most employees still finish within scheduled hours, but overtime becomes noticeably more common than under highly engaged managers. Short overtime periods increase, and a growing share of employees exceed 30 minutes of overtime.

More frequent workload reviews could reduce overtime further and improve work-life balance across the team.

Minimally engaged managers

Minimally engaged managers review overtime reports only occasionally and typically respond only after workload issues become visible. Without regular monitoring and timely action, overtime gradually becomes a normal part of the workday for many employees.

The following chart shows how overtime typically develops under a minimally engaged manager.



- Employees with no overtime: **34%**
- 0–15 minutes overtime: **24%**
- 15–30 minutes overtime: **18%**
- 31–60 minutes overtime: **15%**
- More than 60 minutes overtime: **9%**

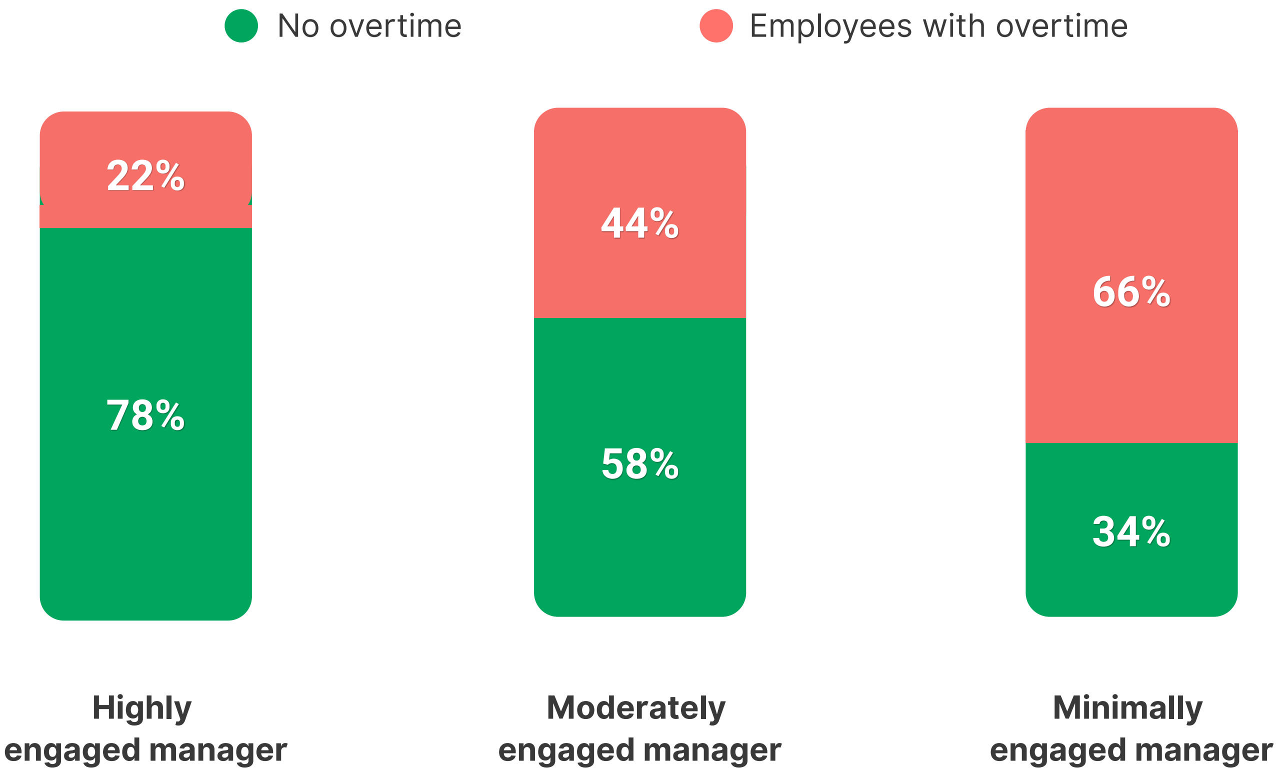
This team experiences consistently high overtime because workload imbalances remain unresolved for extended periods and corrective actions are often delayed.

Overtime becomes a regular part of the workday rather than an exception, with a much larger share of employees accumulating 30 minutes or more of overtime, increasing both burnout risk and unnecessary labor costs.

Without regular workload reviews, overtime gradually becomes the norm rather than the exception, increasing both burnout risk and labor costs.

Comparison

This chart shows that overtime is most common under minimally engaged managers.



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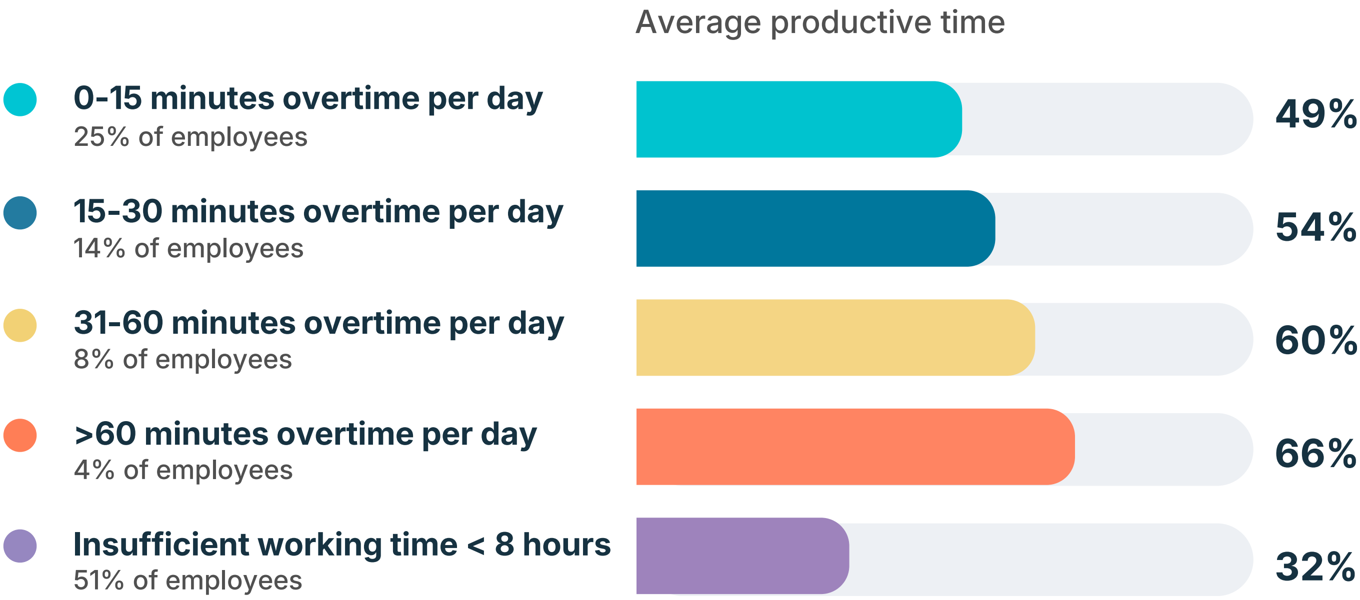
OVERTIME VS PRODUCTIVITY



Overtime can inflate productivity metrics -
but it does not indicate healthier or more efficient work.

Overtime does not always result in lower measured productivity. When employees work extended hours using productive applications, total productive time naturally increases.

However, this increase reflects longer exposure to work tools, not higher efficiency. Overtime inflates productivity metrics by adding more hours, not by improving output per hour or work quality.

Sustained overtime should therefore be interpreted as a capacity and workload signal, not a performance achievement. When productivity growth is driven primarily by longer hours, it raises concerns about sustainability, burnout risk, and dependency on extended work rather than process optimization.

Not all overtime is real overtime

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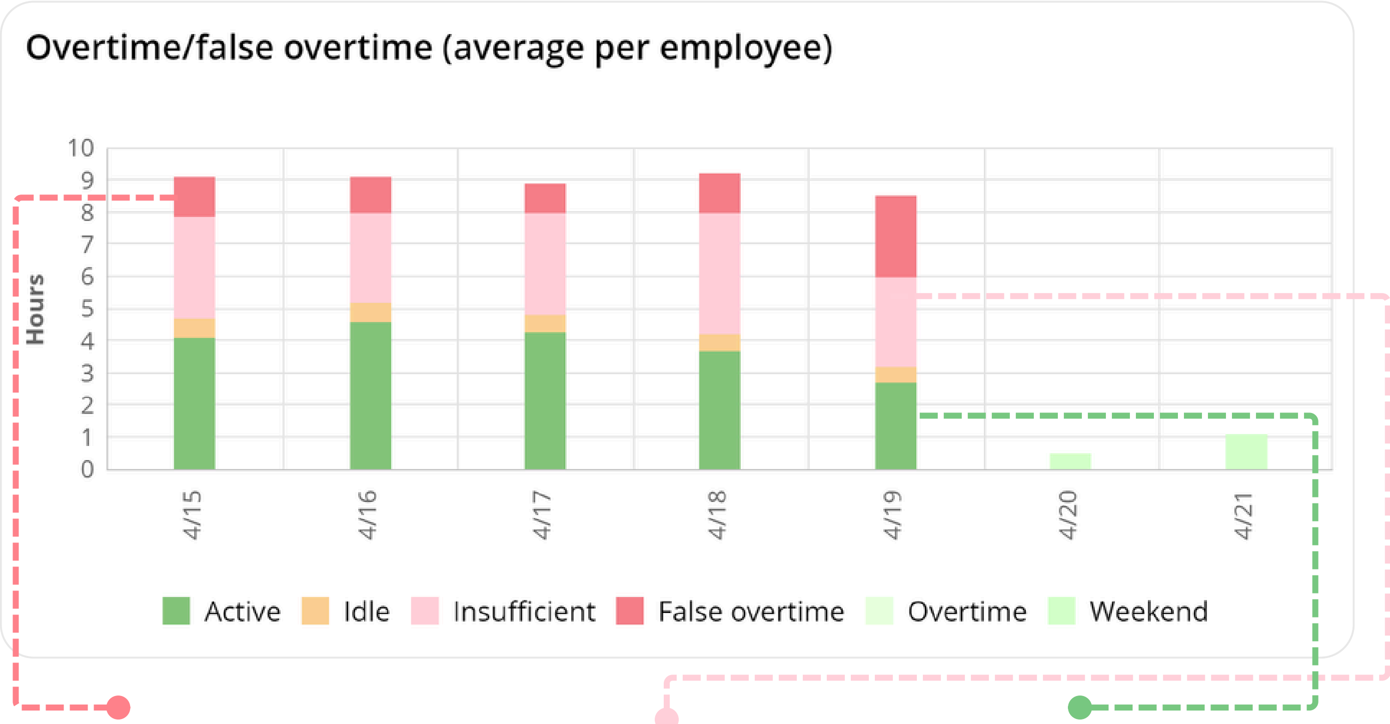

False overtime

Employees stayed after scheduled hours but were mostly **inactive.**

Insufficient activity

Time with **very low activity** that doesn't count as work

Active time

Time spent on **productive** computer activity

Total time after scheduled hours **≈ 45.0 h** (average per employee)

Staying late doesn't alwaus mean employees are working. In this period, most extra hours were inactive or insufficient activity, not real overtime.

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RISK SIGNALS TO WATCH

Repeated late-night work

Weekend activity

Overtime concentrated in few employees

Overtime + high idle time

PRACTICAL INSIGHTS

Track trends, not incidents.

Set clear after-hours expectations.

Share overtime data transparently

Fix root causes, not symptoms.

ABOUT WORKTIME

Who we are

We are a productivity monitoring software company with a strong focus on **employee privacy** and **data protection**.
We call our approach **socially responsible**, **green employee monitoring** - because productivity insights should never come at the cost of trust.

With over **25 years of expertise**, WorkTime has been at the forefront of ethical monitoring practices, helping organizations worldwide improve efficiency without invading privacy.

About the product

WorkTime® employee monitoring software and service is the flagship product of **NesterSoft Inc.**, headquartered in **Canada**.

Launched in **1998**, WorkTime remains the **only non-invasive (“Green”) employee monitoring solution** dedicated solely to productivity analysis. It ensures **transparent, privacy-respectful monitoring** designed for today’s hybrid and remote workplaces.

Compliance and security

WorkTime operates in full alignment with major global privacy standards:

- **HIPAA-safe mode** for healthcare organizations
- **GDPR-safe mode** for the EU and UK
- **POPIA**, **PIPEDA**, and the **Australian Privacy Act**
- **GLBA-safe mode** for financial organizations

Every feature is built to help organizations stay compliant while maintaining employee trust.

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Privacy policy

All research data is anonymized, aggregated, and processed in accordance with applicable privacy laws, including GDPR and other regional regulations.

Research methodology

This research is based on anonymized, aggregated computer activity data collected through the WorkTime platform during 2024–2025.

How to cite

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Media contact

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