

FLSA-832

December 8, 1981

Your letter to our *** concerning employee reimbursement for uniform maintenance of "wash and wear" uniforms, has been referred to this office for reply. You ask that we send you three copies of the revised regulations. In addition, you ask if an employee who is scheduled to work on two consecutive days soils his wash and wear uniform on the first day worked and launders it so that it is clean for his work shift the following day, must be reimbursed for uniform maintenance. We regret the delay in responding.

We have considered your comments under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Federal law of most general application regarding wages and hours of work. Enclosed is a copy of our opinion letter, dated July 31, 1981, which sets forth our position with regard to "wash and wear" uniforms. Since the uniform maintenance reimbursement requirement is an enforcement position, no regulatory revision is required and none has been made.

As explained in opinion letter WH-511, for those uniforms of "wash and wear" material requiring only washing and tumble or drip drying which may be laundered with other personal garments, a uniform maintenance reimbursement will not be required. It is only in those instances where the uniforms must receive special treatment because they are heavily soiled that we hold that employees must be reimbursed for the cost of such maintenance on behalf of the employer who requires the employee to report for work in a clean uniform. Where an employee, for personal reasons, launders a wash and wear uniform on a daily basis, the employer is not required to reimburse the employee for such maintenance. Thus, in the example you presented, if the uniform laundering did not include any special treatment, the employee need not be reimbursed for uniform maintenance costs.

Sincerely,

William M. Otter
Administrator

Enclosure