



**North American
Transport Services**

HOURS OF SERVICE RULES REST BREAKS



The United States Department of Transportation regulates the amount of hours a driver can be behind the wheel per day as well as the amount of hours the driver works per day and per week. One of the biggest problems out on the road and a big factor in fatality crashes is driver fatigue, so keep in mind all these rules have the purpose of keeping you and everyone around you safe.

For some these rules tend to be confusing, so we're going to discuss one of the newer rules most drivers have had problems with. That rule is the mandatory break a driver must take. The rule says a driver "May drive only if 8 hours or less have passed since end of driver's last off-duty or sleeper berth period of at least 30 minutes."

So let's talk about what that means. Let's say for example you woke up in the morning, went to get some breakfast, you came back to the truck and did a 30 minute PTI and started driving. Your 8 hours start to count as soon as you start your PTI, therefore the 30 minutes you spent doing the inspection count and you can only drive for 7 hours and 30 minutes max before your mandatory break.

This doesn't mean you have to drive the 7 and a half hours. You can certainly take a break before the 8 hours of on duty time. For example, let's say you did a 30 minute PTI and drove for 3 hours, and then stopped to get fuel, and decided to take a 30 minute break, then your 8 hours will start counting as soon as you start driving again.

In other words, the 8 hours count as the rule says, since the last 30 minutes of off duty time or sleeper. The reason why most drivers get a violation in regards to this rule, is because they think the time spent on duty, such as doing a PTI, fueling, scaling the load etc., don't need to be accounted for and only driving time counts towards the 8 hours and this simply isn't true, so please make sure you always stop BEFORE 8 hours of driving AND on duty time have passed.

