

Give us a (LOO) BREAK!



Toilet breaks are a basic need, and the provision of toilets is a legal requirement. Yet even today many workers put up with either no toilet facilities, or very poor ones. Others have to ask permission to go to the toilet or are docked pay for going. That is why the TUC is calling for the enforcement of the welfare laws covering the provision of toilet and washing facilities and a change in the law to give workers a specific right to go the toilet whenever they need and without detriment.

Existing rights

Employers must provide suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities, i.e. enough clean, ventilated, suitably lit facilities provided with hot and cold water, soap and towels. There must be separate facilities for men and women unless they are lockable and situated in separate rooms.

Concerns

Employees regularly report serious problems such as filthy facilities, a lack of privacy, inadequate access for mobile workers such as drivers, and in some cases toilets not provided at all. For many there is the added humiliation of having to raise their hand to

ask to go to the toilet and then having their pay docked for doing so.

Enforcement

The TUC is calling on the HSE and other enforcement bodies to enforce the law on the health and safety welfare provisions and ensure that employers provide the facilities they are required to.

A change in the law

The TUC would like to see a specific legal right for workers to go to the toilet without loss of pay; being timed; being monitored; or being discriminated against due to a lack of appropriate facilities, having to ask permission, or a lack of access.

What can workers do?

If you have concerns about a lack of toilet provision in your workplace speak to your union representative. If you are not in a union and would like to join one then call the TUC's union finder number on 0870 600 4882.

Health and safety information about welfare facilities: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg293.pdf