



## Who are hotel housekeepers?

- ❖ Nearly all hotel housekeepers are women. The majority are women of color and immigrants.
- ❖ There are 1.3 million hotel workers in the U.S. and 280,000 in Canada, of whom approximately one quarter are housekeepers. Hotel jobs are a vital, and growing portion of the North American economy.

## The big speed-up — Housekeeping work overloads

- ❖ Hotel housekeepers are facing increasing injuries due to heavy workloads. In most hotels, housekeepers must clean 15 or more rooms per day.
- ❖ Hotel housekeepers must rush to meet a daily quota of cleaned rooms. They frequently skip rest periods and meals in order to finish, and even work off the clock to meet their quotas.
- ❖ In recent years, corporate hotel chains such as Hilton, Hyatt and Sheraton have increased both the pace and the amount of work performed by housekeepers.
  - ❖ Most hotels have recently introduced new room amenities without reducing the number of rooms assigned to housekeepers each day. Luxury beds with heavier mattresses and linens, triple-sheeting, duvets, and extra pillows are increasingly common. Other add-ons like coffee pots, exercise equipment and large hard-to-clean mirrors make room cleaning more difficult and time-consuming.
  - ❖ With hotel business booming and guests paying high room rates, hotel housekeepers face increasing time pressure to maintain a quality guest experience. Many hotel housekeepers report that the hotels are understaffed and they must work at unsafe speeds, increasing their risk of injury.

## Hotel housekeeper work is dangerous work

- ❖ Hotel workers have a 40% higher injury rate (5.9%) than workers in the service sector (4.2%).
- ❖ According to a recent study of company records covering thousands of employee injuries, hotel housekeepers face an injury rate of 10.4%, almost double the injury rate for non-housekeepers (5.6%).
- ❖ Sprains and strains are the most common housekeeper injuries (44% of all injuries in one study) often resulting from demanding tasks like bed making — lifting mattresses, adding extra sheets, and stuffing multiple pillows and duvets — and pushing heavy carts full of linens and amenities.
- ❖ In a recent survey of more than 600 hotel housekeepers in the U.S. and Canada, 91% said that they have suffered work-related pain. Of those who reported workplace pain:
  - ❖ 77% said their workplace pain interfered with routine activities.
  - ❖ Two out of every three workers visited their doctor to deal with workplace pain.
  - ❖ 66% took pain medication just to get through their daily quota.
- ❖ Hotel housekeeper injuries are debilitating. Back injuries, housemaids' knee (bursitis), and shoulder pain can lead to permanent disability.
- ❖ When injured workers try to return to work, most hotels do not offer them lighter tasks to do, forcing them to choose between getting hurt again or not working at all.

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For more information contact: [www.hotelworkersrising.org](http://www.hotelworkersrising.org)