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100,000 asked to join hospital lawsuit

The action against UPMC, Mercy and West Penn alleges workers weren't fully paid.

BY BOBBY KERLIK
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

An attorney suing UPMC, the former Mercy Hospital and West Penn Allegheny Health System said Thursday that 100,000 current and former employees

will receive letters asking whether they want to join a class-action lawsuit over hours it says they should have been paid but weren't.

Attorney Nelson Thomas said the notices will be sent to hourly employees who worked at the hospitals during the past three years.

The lawsuits filed in U.S. District Court, Downtown, accuse the hospitals of automatically docking employees a half-hour for meals, regardless of

whether they took breaks; not paying for work performed before and after scheduled shifts; and not paying for required training.

UPMC spokesman Paul Wood said the Rochester, N.Y.-based law firm filed similar lawsuits against other hospitals.

"UPMC intends to vigorously defend itself against this claim, which is false and without merit. UPMC's policies are very clear — if employees work through their meal break, they are re-

quired to cancel the lunch deduction in our timekeeping system for which they are then paid," Wood said in a statement.

"UPMC regularly and routinely pays our employees working through a meal break, and employees following our guidelines were fully and completely compensated."

Dan Laurent, a spokesman for West Penn Allegheny Health System, declined comment.

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PAUL WOOD
UPMC SPOKESMAN

*Prior results are not a guarantee of future results.