****Young Workers

### Getting that first job can be exciting and rewarding if you have been properly trained to do the task safely.

**DID YOU KNOW**

In 2011, more than 331 young workers were killed and 106,170 injured on the job. In fact, a teen worker was being injured on the job every nine minutes. Not one of these teens went to work thinking they would get injured or killed.

**Young Workers Need To Understand**

You have rights on the job, and your employer has the responsibility to provide a safe workplace. Employers must follow all OSHA safety and health standards to prevent you from being injured or becoming ill on the job. Child labor laws restrict the types of jobs and the hours that youth under age 18 can work. They also prohibit workers under age 18 from using certain equipment. Learn about the [**federal**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/know-the-limits/index.htm) and [**state**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/law-library/state-laws/index.htm) child labor laws that apply to young workers.

**Note: underlined words- use the control key; Ctrl + click to follow the link for more information.**

**You have the right to:**

* Work in a safe place
* Receive safety and health training in a language that you understand
* Ask questions if you don’t understand instructions or if something seems unsafe
* Use and be trained on required safety gear, such as hard hats, goggles and ear plugs
* Exercise your workplace safety rights without retaliation or discrimination
* [**File a confidential complaint**](https://www.osha.gov/as/opa/worker/complain.html) with OSHA if you believe there is a serious hazard or that your employer is not following OSHA standards

**To help protect yourself, you can:**

* Report unsafe conditions to a shift/team leader or supervisor
* Wear any safety gear required to do your job
* Follow the safety rules
* Ask questions
* Ask for help if needed

Know The Work Rules:

***I am under 14***

Kids under 14 can gain valuable experience working, but there are limits to what jobs you can do.

If you are under 14 you are only allowed to:

* Deliver newspapers to customers
* Babysit on a casual basis
* Work as an actor or performer in movies, TV, radio, or theater
* Work as a homeworker gathering evergreens and making evergreen wreaths
* Work for a business owned entirely by your parents as long as it is not in mining, manufacturing, or any of the [**17 hazardous occupations**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/know-the-limits/hazards/index.htm).

***I am 14 or 15***

Fourteen and 15-year-olds are limited in what hours they can work and what jobs they can do.

All work must be performed outside school hours and you may not work:

* More than 3 hours on a school day, including Friday
* More than 18 hours per week when school is in session
* More than 8 hours per day when school is not in session
* More than 40 hours per week when school is not in session
* Before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. on any day, except from June 1st through Labor Day, when nighttime work hours are extended to 9 p.m.

If you are home schooled, attend private school, or no school, a "school day" or "school week" is any day or week when the public school where you live while employed is in session. There are some exceptions to the hour’s standards for 14 and 15-year-olds if you have graduated from high school, you are excused from compulsory school attendance, or you are enrolled in an approved Work Experience or Career Exploration Program or Work-Study Program.

There are [**certain jobs**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs43.htm) you are allowed to do, including:

* [R**etail occupations**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs38.htm);
* Intellectual or creative work such as computer programming, teaching, tutoring, singing, acting, or playing an instrument
* Errands or delivery work by foot, bicycle and public transportation
* Clean-up and yard work which does not include using power-driven mowers, cutters, trimmers, edgers, or similar equipment
* Work in connection with cars and trucks such as dispensing gasoline or oil and washing or hand polishing
* Some kitchen and [**food service**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs2a.htm) work including reheating food, washing dishes, cleaning equipment, and limited [**cooking**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs58.htm)
* Cleaning vegetables and fruits, wrapping sealing, and labeling, weighing pricing, and stocking of items when performed in areas separate from a freezer or meat cooler
* Loading or unloading objects for use at a worksite including rakes, hand-held clippers, and shovels
* 14 and 15-year-olds who meet certain requirements can perform limited tasks in [**sawmills and woodshops**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs55.htm)
* 15-year-olds who meet certain requirements can perform [**lifeguard**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs60.htm) duties at traditional swimming pools and water [**amusement parks**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs37.htm)

If an occupation is not specifically permitted, it is prohibited for youth ages 14 and 15.

***I am 16 or 17***

Although there are no federal rules limiting the hours 16 and 17-year-olds may work, there are restrictions on the types of jobs you can do.

At 16 and 17 you may work unlimited hours.

Any job that has not been declared hazardous by the Secretary of Labor is permissible for 16- and 17 year olds.

For a list of hazardous jobs, see information under "What do I need to know about [**workplace hazards**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/know-the-limits/hazards/index.htm)?"

**How much should I be paid?**

Although some exceptions may apply, in most circumstances you must be paid the federal minimum wage. Your [**eligibility**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs14.htm) for the federal minimum wage depends on what you do and where you work.

***I am 18***

Once you turn 18, most youth work rules do not apply.

There are no limits to the number of hours 18-year-olds can work.

Once you turn 18, you can perform any job.

**How much should I be paid?**

Although some exceptions may apply, in most circumstances you must be paid the federal minimum wage. Your [**eligibility**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs14.htm) for the federal minimum wage depends on what you do and where you work.

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**Agricultural Jobs**

If you are not yet 16, there are many restrictions on your employment in [**agriculture**](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs40.htm), particularly in occupations declared hazardous by the Secretary of Labor. Once you turn 16 there are no restrictions that apply when you work on farms. [**States**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/law-library/state-laws/index.htm) also have rules, and employers must comply with both.

**What hours can I work?**

In agriculture, you can work any time outside of school hours. As with non-agricultural jobs, once you turn 16 you can work on any farm at any time. If you are home schooled, attend private school, or no school, school hours would be the same as the public school where you live while you are working.

**What jobs can I do?**

If you are:

* Under 12: You may work outside of school hours in any non-hazardous job on a small farm that is exempt from the federal minimum wage provisions as long as you have parental consent.
* 12 or 13: You may work outside of school hours in non-hazardous jobs on a farm where your parent(s) work or with written parental consent.
* 14 or 15: You can work outside of school hours in any non-hazardous agricultural job.
* 16 or older: You can work in any farm job at any time.

Youth of any age may work at any time in any job on a farm owned or operated by their parent or person standing in place of their parent.

**What do I need to know about workplace hazards on farms?**

Federal law establishes safety standards and restrictions for young workers on farms. If you are not yet 16, you are prohibited from being employed in occupations that have been declared hazardous. There may be some exceptions that apply to your particular situation. Be sure to check [**state regulations**](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/law-library/state-laws/index.htm) for young workers and the [**OSHA**](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/index.html) rules, which apply to all employees, regardless of their age.

To enjoy a long working career you want to do it injury free. Always follow procedures and workplace safety rules, report unsafe conditions and look out for your co-workers.

\*This information is provided to you by the IES Safety Committee