



OSHA/WISHA  
+  
TEEN WORKER RIGHTS AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES



# OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act)

## 1.1 Why was the law enacted in 1970?

**Too many workers getting injured or killed on the job. This law gave the federal government the right to set and enforce workplace safety and health standards in all 50 states.**

## 1.2 What is the relationship of individual state laws to the federal ones?

**State laws must be at least as effective/powerful as the federal laws, and can be even more restrictive.**

1.3 What is the “Catchall Standard” and what does it mean?

**General duty laws covering generic topics. Designed to maintain a minimum set of standards that promote and enforce a SAFE work environment.**

1.4 What are the basic workers’ rights?

- 1. The right to a safe workplace, safe practices and safety training**
- 2. The right to request an inspection if you are asked to do something unsafe**
- 3. The right to be protected from retaliation if you report unsafe practices (Whistle Blower Laws)**
- 4. The right to be involved in the inspection process**

## 1.5 What must be in an employer log and summary book?

**It must:**

- **document all workplace injuries so safety practices can be tracked**
- **document all workplace illnesses so the CDC and local agencies can better track the spread of diseases**

1.6 If an employee requests an OSHA inspection what happens next?

- **A formal complaint can be written up**
- **The name of the “Whistle Blower” will be hidden initially**
- **An inspection may be scheduled, depending on Risk Analysis**
- **The employee can be part of the inspection (to point out where things are unsafe)**

1.7 What protections does the employee have once an inspection has happened?

**You cannot be fired or retaliated or discriminated against because you reported your employer**

1.8 What is “Refusal to Work?”

**If the workplace is not safe, you have the right to refuse to do unsafe tasks without retaliation**

2.1 Who is responsible for maintaining a safe working environment and practices?

**A. The Employer and/or Owner**

**B. State and Federal Regulatory Agencies**

**C. Individual Employees**

2.2 What are some of the organizations responsible for workplace safety? (Click on any of the names to visit their websites)

**A. [NSF – the National Safety Foundation](#)**  
(Responsible for making sure equipment is safe for the purpose it was made: no lead paint, safe metals, less likely to break or chip, etc.)



2.2 What are some of the organizations or laws responsible for workplace safety (continued)? (Click on any of the names to visit their websites)

**B. OSHA – the Occupational Safety and Health Administration**  
(Federal agency responsible for Workplace Safety)

**C. WISHA – the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act**  
(State law to promote and enforce workplace safety and workers' rights, overseen by L&I)

**D. L&I – the Department of Labor and Industries**  
(State agency responsible for ensuring workers' compensation like wages and medical care if you are injured on the job)

2.3 What is the role of these regulatory agencies?

**To promote workplace safety and protect workers' rights**



# **Lost Youth: Four True Stories of Workplace Injuries that Happened to Young Workers**



It's time to take a step back and look at the big picture.

# **Young Workers (ages 16-22) in Washington State**

- A. 3 young workers are injured in our state every hour
- B. 79 young workers are injured in our state every day
- C. 1 of every 16 young workers are injured in our state every year
- D. 1 out of every 11 young male workers (9%) are injured every year
- E. 1 out of every 22 young female workers (4.5%) are injured every year

## **Young Workers' Rights and Responsibilities**

- A. You have the right to training
- B. You have the right to a safe workplace
- C. You have the right to refuse unsafe work practices
- D. You have the responsibility to take seriously all training, to follow safe practices, and report any unsafe conditions you notice

[Click Here to learn more about youth employment, rights and responsibilities](#)

# Minor Employment Rules

Minors are allowed to work limited hours compared to adults in Washington.

In general, the hours they can work vary depending on age, the type of work, and whether school is in session.

The work week for minors is Sunday through Saturday and the school week is Monday through Friday.

Any week with any amount of school time is considered a school week. Minors cannot work during school hours.

Employers may apply for variances from these limitations.

## NON-AGRICULTURAL JOBS

Non-agricultural jobs include retail, restaurants, manufacturing, construction, etc. All employers hiring minors need a minor work permit. The tables below show the hours youth 14-17 years old can work.

The tables below show the hours youth 16-17 years old can work, and are NOT to be exceeded.

Schedule	Hours / day	Hours / week	Days / week	Start – End time
* 8 hours Fri.–Sun. ** Midnight Fri.–Sat. or the day before a school holiday *** Midnight Fri.–Sat.				
School week	4 hours *	20 hours	6 days	7 a.m. – 10 p.m. **
Non-school week	8 hours	48 hours	6 days	5 a.m. – Midnight
School week with special variance	6 hours *	28 hours	6 days	7 a.m. – 10 p.m. ***

### Important notes

Minors working in restaurants and retail businesses must be supervised by an adult after 8 p.m.

Only teens 16-17 years old can work overtime. All overtime rules apply for any hours worked over 40 hours in a week.

The same hours of work apply to minors attending home school or alternative schools, and minors not enrolled in school.

“School hours” for minors are defined as the hours their neighborhood public school is in session.

# Prohibited Duties

Some jobs are hazardous for young workers. Washington State and federal laws prohibit many jobs and duties for minor workers. Prohibited duties vary depending on the worker's age and whether the job is agricultural or non-agricultural.

Youth apprentices and student learners within approved vocational or instructional programs can be granted limited exemptions from some of these prohibitions.

## **Prohibited Duties for All Youth Under 18 Years Old**

The following jobs and duties are prohibited for minors working in any industry:

Slaughtering, meat processing, rendering, and packing

Any work including operation, repair, oiling, cleaning, adjusting, or setting up of:

- Power-driven woodworking machines

- Circular, band, or chain saws

- Power-driven metal forming, punching, and shearing machines, including guillotine shears

Wrecking, demolition, and excavation

Roofing

# Prohibited Duties cont.

Handling or exposure to highly toxic, carcinogenic, corrosive, and poisonous chemicals, especially agricultural chemicals of Category I or II toxicity. (Does not include handling sealed containers in retail situations)

Handling, use, or manufacture of explosives or blasting agents.

Working where a strike, labor dispute, or lockout exists

Most driving of motor vehicles on public roads to make deliveries, such as pizza delivery or other time-sensitive deliveries.

## **Common prohibited duties for restaurants, delis, grocery stores, and food processing**

Operating powered meat/food slicers and grinders\*

Using powered bakery equipment such as a Hobart mixer\*

Working alone past 8 p.m. without adult supervision on the premises (this restriction only applies to service occupations, e.g., retail and restaurant industries)

\*Youth apprentices and student learners within approved vocational or instructional programs can be granted limited exemptions from some of these prohibitions.



# Wages, Rest Breaks & Meal Periods

## Wages:

**Youth under 16 years** old must be paid at least 85% of the minimum wage

**Youth 16-17 years** old must be paid at least the [current state minimum wage](#) (click to view site)

## Rest Breaks:

Minors must be allowed a paid rest break, free from duties.

They CANNOT waive their meal break or rest break requirements.

### **Youth under 16 years old**

- Breaks must not be scheduled near the beginning of the work shift
- They must take a rest break of at least 10 minutes for every 2 hours worked
- They cannot work more than 2 hours without a 10 minute rest break or 30 minute meal period

### **Youth 16-17 years old**

- Employees can't be required to work more than 3 hours without a rest break
- Breaks must be scheduled as close to the midpoint of a work period as possible
- Employers can require workers to stay on the job site during a rest break
- Rest breaks taken are considered "hours worked" when calculating paid sick leave & overtime

# Wages, Rest Breaks & Meal Periods cont.

## Meal Breaks:

Minors CANNOT waive their meal break or rest break requirements.

### Youth under 16 years old

- Must not work more than 4 hours without being given an uninterrupted meal period that must be separate and distinct from, and in addition to, their rest breaks.
- Must receive a paid rest break of at least 10 minutes for every 2 hours worked.
- Must have a rest period after 2 hours for every 4 hours of work.

### Youth 16-17 years old

- Are entitled to an uninterrupted meal break of at least 30 minutes if they work more than 5 hours in a day.
- Are entitled to at least a 10 minute paid rest break for each 4 hours worked.
- Must be allowed a rest period no later than the third hour of the shift.