

L&I Offers Reminders About Summer Job Rules for Teens and COVID-19 Workplace Safety

Harrisburg, PA – As counties across Pennsylvania move into the green phase and teenagers begin summer employment, Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Secretary Jerry Oleksiak is reminding Pennsylvanians that the state’s Child Labor Law limits working hours and the types of work that may be performed by minors. Oleksiak is also urging businesses hiring minors to continue [following COVID-19 social distancing and mitigation recommendations](#) to ensure their health and safety.

“Summer employment offers Pennsylvania’s young people the opportunity to gain valuable work experience, earn a paycheck, and potentially start a path toward full-time employment,” Oleksiak said. “Businesses that employ young people, especially during this unprecedented time, must still follow the laws in place and take precautions to protect younger workers to ensure they have a safe, positive experience.”

Governor Tom Wolf’s [Process to Reopen Pennsylvania](#) outlines restrictions for counties in yellow or green phases of reopening. Businesses with in-person operations must follow [business and building safety orders](#).

Pennsylvania's Child Labor Law protects the health, safety and welfare of employees under 18 in the commonwealth by restricting employment in certain establishments, the hours of work, work conditions and occupations involved.

The law covers three age groups: less than 14 years of age, 14- and 15-year-olds, and 16- and 17-year-olds. All minors under 16 must have a written statement by the minor’s parent or guardian acknowledging the duties and hours of employment and granting permission to work.

Under-14 Work Restrictions

Children under age 14 may not be employed in any occupation; however, they are permitted to work on a family farm or in domestic service, such as lawn or house chores. Other exceptions are made for caddies, newspaper carriers and – with special permits – juvenile entertainment performers.

14-15-Year-Olds Work Restrictions

During the summer, 14- and 15-year-olds may only work between 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM and no more than eight hours a day, or 40 hours a week. For some occupations, such as newspaper delivery, caddies and some farm work, different standards may apply.

16-17-Year-Olds Work Restrictions

During the summer, 16- and 17-year-olds may only work between 6:00 AM and 1:00 AM and no more than 10 hours a day, or 48 hours a week. A minor may also refuse any request to work that exceeds 44 hours per week.

All minors may not work more than six consecutive days, and must be allowed a 30-minute meal period on or before five consecutive hours of work. Full- or part-time minors must be paid at least minimum wage, which is currently \$7.25 per hour.

Youth under age 18 may not work in any occupation considered dangerous to life or limb, or harmful to their morals. Exceptions include authorized apprenticeships, student learners and graduates of an approved vocational, technical or industrial-education curriculum that prepares students for the specific work. Dangerous occupations include electrical, explosive and excavating work, heavy or cutting machinery, welding, wrecking and demolition, roofing, mining, freight elevators and many railroad jobs.

Workers who are 18 years and older are not subject to child labor laws. The federal child labor law also applies in Pennsylvania. Where they overlap, the more stringent of the two laws takes precedence in favor of the young worker. More information is available by calling L&I's Bureau of Labor Law Compliance toll-free at 800-932-0665, or by visiting the bureau's [website](#).

Visit the commonwealth's [Responding to COVID-19 guide](#) for the latest guidance and resources for Pennsylvanians or the [Pennsylvania Department of Health's dedicated coronavirus webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19.