



# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STANDARDS

## Employment Permit Application for 14 - 17 Year-Olds

In accordance with 1 M.G.L. c. 149, §§86-89, if you are under 18 years of age, you must obtain a work permit before starting a new job. Questions about this application should be directed to the Department of Labor Standards at (617) 626-6952.

### Instructions

**I. Review all of the information in this file, including:**

- *Protecting Your Working Teen: A Guide for Parents*
- *The Child Labor Laws in Massachusetts*
- *The Massachusetts Guide for Working Teens*

**II. Follow the outlined steps below.**

**III. Bring the signed work permit to your employer who must keep it until you leave the job.**

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### Steps for getting an Employment Permit:

1. Obtain a job offer from an employer.
2. Ask the employer to complete the *Promise of Employment* section (page 2).
3. If you are 14 or 15 years old, ask your doctor to complete the *Physicians Certificate of Health* section (page 2).
  - 16 and 17 year-olds are not required to complete this section.
4. Ask your parent, guardian, or custodian to sign the appropriate section of this application (page 2).
5. Sign the appropriate section of this application yourself (page 2).
6. Bring the completed application and accompanying proof of age to Sharon High School.
  - Proof of age can include a birth certificate, passport, or immigration record.
7. Receive the Employment Permit from Sharon High School.
  - Applicants are expected to appear in person to receive the permit.

1 Minors who are 17 years of age, who can show documented proof of a high school diploma or the equivalent to the school official authorized to issue work permits, do not need a signed work permit, but must still complete this permit application.

## Promise of Employment

Name of Minor:
Name of Employer:
Business Address:
Job Title & Primary Duties:
Number of Hours per day Minor is to be Employed:
<i>The undersigned agrees to employ this minor as stated above and in compliance with state law.</i>
Signature of Employer or Authorized Agent: _____
Date: _____

## Physician's Certificate of Health

<i>I hereby certify that I have made a thorough physical examination of the following named 14 or 15 year-old minor, _____, and that in my opinion, said minor is in sufficiently sound health and physically able to perform the work indicated above.</i>
Signature of Physician: _____
Date: _____

## Parent/Guardian/Custodian Acknowledgement

I hereby approve the issuance of a permit for the work indicated above.
Printed Name of Parent, Guardian, or Custodian: _____
Signature of Parent, Guardian, or Custodian: _____
Date: _____

## Future Employee Acknowledgement

Signature of Minor: _____
Date: _____

***A summary of laws governing minors' hours of work and hazardous occupations can be found at the end of this application form.***

# Summary of Massachusetts<sup>2</sup> Laws Regulating Minors' Work Hours and Occupation Restrictions

## Prohibited Jobs (Hazardous Orders)

**Persons under 14 may not work:** There are a few exceptions to this such as working as news carriers, on farms, and in entertainment (with a special permit).

## Persons under 16 years old may *NOT*:

- Operate, clean or repair power-driven machinery (except office machines or machines in retail or food service not otherwise prohibited)
- Cook (except on electric or gas grills that do not have open flames)
- Operate fryolators, rotisseries, NEICO broilers, or pressure cookers
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, processors, cutters and mixers
- Perform any baking activities
- Operate microwave ovens (except to heat food in microwave ovens with a maximum capacity of 140 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Clean kitchen surfaces that are hotter than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Filter, transport, or dispose of cooking oil or grease hotter than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Work in freezers or meat coolers
- Work in a manufacturing facility or occupation (e.g., in a factory, as an assembler)
- Work on ladders, scaffolds or their substitutes
- Work in garages, except dispensing gas and oil
- Work in brick or lumber yards
- Work in amusement places (e.g., pool or billiard room, or bowling alley)
- Work in barber shops
- Work in construction, transportation, communications, or public utilities (except doing clerical
- work away from heavy machinery off the job-site)
- Work in warehouses (except doing clerical work)
- Load or unload trucks, railroad cars, or conveyors
- Ride in or on a motor vehicle (except in a passenger seat wearing a seatbelt)
- Wash windows in public or commercial buildings if the window sill is more than 10 feet above the ground
- Work doing laundry in a commercial laundry or dry cleaning establishment
- Work as a public messenger
- Work at processing operations (e.g., in meat, fish, or poultry processing or cracking nuts, bulk or mass mailing)
- Work around boilers or in engine rooms
- Do industrial homework
- Work with dangerous electrical machinery or appliances
- Work that is determined by the Massachusetts Attorney General to be dangerous to the health and well-being of minors
- **Work in any of the occupations or tasks prohibited for persons under age 18**

<sup>2</sup> This is a compilation of state and federal child labor laws. The most protective laws are presented here and apply to all employers of teens including parents who may employ their children. There are additional regulations in this area not summarized here and some exceptions for employers in agricultural industries. Questions about the state child labor laws should be directed to the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Fair Labor and Business Practices Division (617-727-3465). Questions about federal child labor laws should be directed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (617-624-6700).

**Persons under 18 years old may *NOT*:**

- Drive a vehicle, forklift or work assist vehicle (except golf carts in certain circumstances)
- Ride as a passenger in a forklift
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven meat slicers, grinders or choppers
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven bakery machines (except for certain countertop models and pizza dough rollers)
- Work 30 feet or more above ground or water
- Handle, serve, or sell alcoholic beverages
- Use circular or band saws, guillotine shears, wood chippers, or abrasive cutting discs
- Use power-driven woodworking machines
- Use, service, drive or work from hoisting machines
- Operate or load power-driven paper balers, compactors, or other power-driven paper processing machines
- Use power-driven metal-forming, punching, or shearing machines
- Use buffing or polishing equipment
- Manufacture brick, tile, or kindred products
- Manufacture or store explosives
- Work in excavation, wrecking, demolition, or shipbreaking
- Work in forest fire fighting, forest fire prevention, timber track operations or forestry service
- Work in logging, sawmilling, or mining
- Work slaughtering, packing, or processing meat or poultry
- Work in railway operations
- Work in roofing or on or about a roof
- Work in foundries or around blast furnaces
- Work manufacturing phosphorus or phosphorus matches
- Work where they are exposed to radioactive substances
- Work as a firefighter or engineer on a boat
- Oil or clean hazardous machinery in motion
- **Work in any job requiring the possession or use of a firearm\***

**Tasks not specifically permitted by the US DOL Secretary of Labor are prohibited.**

## **Legal Work Hours for Teens in Massachusetts**

**Note:** After 8:00 p.m., all minors must have the direct and immediate supervision of an adult supervisor who is located in the workplace and is reasonably accessible to the minor, unless the minor works at a kiosk, cart or stand in the common area of an enclosed shopping mall that has security from 8:00 p.m. until the mall is closed to the public.\*

### **14 and 15 Year Olds - Work Hours**

Only between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. during the school year

Not during school hours

Only between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. during the summer

(from July 1 through Labor Day)

### **Maximum Hours When School Is in Session**

18 hours a week

3 hours a day on school days

8 hours a day Saturday, Sunday, holidays

6 days a week

### **Maximum Hours When School Is Not in Session**

40 hours a week

8 hours a day

6 days a week

### **16 and 17 Year Olds - Work Hours\***

Only between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. (on nights preceding a regularly scheduled school day) – if the establishment stops serving clients or customers at 10:00 p.m., the minor may be employed until 10:15 p.m.

Only between 6 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. (on nights not preceding a regularly scheduled school day).

Exception for restaurants and racetracks: only between 6 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (on nights not preceding a regularly scheduled school day).

### **Maximum Hours of Work – Whether or Not School is in Session**

48 hours a week

9 hours a day

6 days a week

\* Indicates a change MA Child Labor Laws, effective date January 3, 2007.

# Protecting Your Working Teen

## *A Guide for Parents*

Work is a valuable experience for many teenagers. It can provide needed money, skills, and self-confidence. At the same time, working teens also face risks, even in places that seem safe. Teens are more likely than adults to get hurt at work. An estimated 179,000 U.S. teens are injured at work every year, and many are killed. In Massachusetts, hundreds of teens visit hospital emergency rooms each year for work-related injuries.

Injuries at work should not be considered “part of the job.” Most injuries can and should be prevented. Employers, young workers, and parents all have roles to play in ensuring positive, safe work experiences.

### **Steps you can take to help your teen stay safe at work:**

**1. Know the child labor laws and make sure your teen knows them** (see reverse).

**2. Talk with your teen about his or her job.**

Ask your teen about:

- ◆ Tasks - what your teen is asked to do.
- ◆ Training - whether your teen has been trained to do assigned tasks safely.
- ◆ The workplace itself - if there are hazards like slippery floors or machines without safety guards.
- ◆ The supervisor - where the supervisor is while your teen is working, how receptive he or she is to listening to employees’ concerns.
- ◆ Safety equipment - if your teen is provided with goggles, gloves, special shoes, or other safety equipment.

**3. Set limits on hours.**

Studies have shown that teens who work more than 20 hours a week do not do as well in school as those who work fewer hours.

Teachers report that teens who work late at night are less alert in class and less prepared.

**4. Help your teen talk about his or her concerns.**

Encourage your teen to answer the following questions:

**What do you want your supervisor to do or change?**

Examples:

“I only want to work 3 hours on school days.”

“I want help lifting heavy boxes.”

**Why do you want your supervisor to make this change?**

Examples:

“So I can keep up with my schoolwork.”

“So I won’t get hurt.”

**Whose help do you want?**

Examples:

“I’d feel more comfortable approaching the boss with some of my coworkers.”

“I’d like my parents to come with me when I meet with the boss.”

**How will you talk to your supervisor about this?**

Examples:

“Can I make an appointment to talk with you about a problem I’m having?”

“Lifting boxes is hurting my back, and I’d like to work out another way to get the job done.”

### **Contact any of the agencies listed below if you need additional help:**

MA Office of the Attorney General, Fair Labor Division (enforces state child labor laws).....(617) 727-3465  
US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (enforces federal child labor laws).....(617) 624-6700  
MA Department of Labor Standards (oversees the work permit process).....(617) 626-6952  
MA Department of Industrial Accidents (oversees the workers’ compensation system).....(800) 323-3249

For more information, contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health *Teens at Work Project*  
(617) 624-5632 | [teens.atwork@state.ma.us](mailto:teens.atwork@state.ma.us) | [www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork](http://www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork)



# The Child Labor Laws in Massachusetts

Child labor laws exist to protect teenagers in the workplace. They limit the number of hours teens are legally able to work. The legal work hours for minors are:

## 14 & 15 Year-Olds

- ◆ Only between 7 am and 7 pm (9 pm during summer)
- ◆ Not during school hours
- ◆ Maximum of 18 hours per week (40 during school vacation), 3 hours a day (8 hours on weekends and during school vacation), and 6 days per week

### Persons UNDER 14 may NOT WORK!

There are a few exceptions to this, such as babysitting, working as news carriers, on farms, and in entertainment (with a special permit).

## 16 & 17 Year-Olds

- ◆ Only between 6 am and 10 pm on nights preceding a regularly scheduled school day
- ◆ If the establishment stops serving customers at 10 pm, the minor may be employed until 10:15 pm
- ◆ Only between 6 am and 11:30 pm on nights *not* preceding a regularly scheduled school day, except in restaurants and race tracks until midnight
- ◆ Maximum of 48 hours per week, 9 hours per day, and 6 days per week

**After 8 pm, all minors must be directly supervised by an adult who is located in the workplace and who is reasonably accessible.** (With the exception of minors who work at kiosks in the common areas of some malls.)

Child labor laws also protect teens' health and safety by prohibiting them from working in hazardous jobs or doing dangerous tasks. The following is a list of *some* of these tasks:

*A complete summary of prohibited tasks is available online: [www.mass.gov/dols/youth](http://www.mass.gov/dols/youth)*

## Persons under 16 years-old may NOT:

- Cook (except on electric or gas grills that do not have open flames)
- Operate fryolators, rotisseries, NEICO broilers, or pressure cookers
- Operate, clean, or repair power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, processors, cutters, or mixers
- Perform any baking activities
- Operate microwave ovens (except to heat food in microwave ovens with a maximum capacity of 140 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Clean kitchen surfaces that are hotter than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Filter, transport, or dispose of cooking oil or grease hotter than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Work in freezers or meat coolers
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven machinery (except office machines or machines for retail, cleanup or kitchen work not otherwise prohibited)
- Work in a manufacturing facility (e.g. a factory)
- Work on or use ladders, scaffolds, or their substitutes
- Work in amusement places (e.g., pool or billiard room, or bowling alley)
- Work in door-to-door street sales, including work as a sign waiver (except directly outside of employer establishment)
- Ride in or on a motor vehicle (except in passenger seat if wearing a seatbelt)
- Work with dangerous electrical machinery or appliances
- **Work in any of the occupations or tasks prohibited for persons under age 18**

## Persons under 18 years-old may NOT:

- Drive a vehicle, forklift, or work assist vehicle (except golf carts in certain circumstances)
- Ride as a passenger on a forklift
- Operate, clean, or repair power-driven meat slicers, grinders or choppers
- Operate, clean, or repair power-driven bakery machines (except for certain countertop models and pizza dough rollers)
- Work 30 feet or more above ground or water
- Handle, serve, or sell alcoholic beverages
- Use circular, chain or band saws; guillotine shears; wood chippers; and abrasive cutting discs
- Use power-driven woodworking machines
- Use, service, drive, or work from hoisting machines
- Operate or load power-driven balers, compactors, or paper processing machines
- Work slaughtering, packing, or processing meat and poultry
- Work in roofing or on or about a roof
- Work where they are exposed to radioactive substances
- Oil or clean hazardous machinery in motion
- Work in any job requiring the possession or use of a firearm

### Persons UNDER 18 must have WORK PERMITS

All teens under 18 must get a work permit from the school district where they live or go to school. For more information, visit the website of the Department of Labor Standards: [www.mass.gov/dols/youth](http://www.mass.gov/dols/youth)

## Workers' Compensation

If your child is injured at work, they may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. Contact the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents at 800-323-3249 or [www.mass.gov/dia](http://www.mass.gov/dia) for more information.

# The Massachusetts guide for working teens

Protect Your **Health** | Know Your **Rights**




Brought to you by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
and the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General

June 2011





The background of the page is a complex, abstract design. It features a light green base color with various shades of green and blue. There are numerous overlapping circles and rings in different sizes and colors, including light blue, dark blue, yellow, and white. Some circles have concentric rings, creating a layered effect. A prominent white starburst or spark-like shape is located in the lower right quadrant. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and somewhat futuristic.

This guide was published by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's *Teens at Work: Injury Surveillance and Prevention Project*. The text and design was developed by the Office of the Attorney General and the Teens at Work Project (which is funded in part by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health).

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# are you working or looking for a job?

If you are like most young people, the answer is probably, “yes.” Work is a big part of life for many teenagers and while having a job can bring a lot of benefits there are also potential risks.

Every year in the US, over 200,000 teenagers are injured on the job and, tragically, nearly 70 die from work-related injuries.

Every year in Massachusetts, over 900 teens visit emergency departments for work-related injuries, and one young worker is fatally injured at work each year.

## so how can you protect yourself?

You can begin by...

- Knowing the laws that cover youth employment
- Understanding your rights and responsibilities
- Recognizing workplace hazards
- Getting help when you need it

In this guide, you will find useful information on all of these topics.

## youth employment laws

The youth employment laws are in place to protect you from dangers on the job. They also set limits on the hours that you can work. These laws were established to address a historical lack of rights and protections for teen workers on the job.

The Massachusetts Youth Employment Laws, also known as the Child Labor Laws, are found in Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 149, sections 56-105.



# rights and responsibilities

Your employer is required to maintain a safe work environment. You have a role to play in your own safety as well. In this partnership, you have both rights and responsibilities.

**your rights** By law, your employer must:

- Provide a safe and healthy workplace.
- Provide health and safety training, including information on harmful chemicals you might use.
- Pay for medical care if you get hurt or sick because of your job (you may also be entitled to lost wages).
- Pay you at least the Massachusetts minimum wage (in most cases, \$8.00 per hour).
- Pay you for all of the hours you worked.
- Pay you 1.5 times your regular pay for each hour over 40 that you work in a week.

You also have a right to:

- Express your concerns about health and safety.
- File a complaint with OSHA about health and safety problems.
- Refuse to work if the job is immediately dangerous to your life or health.
- Work without racial or sexual harassment.
- Join or organize a union.
- Retain tips you receive – either directly, or through a valid tip-pool with your co-workers.

**your responsibilities** As a worker, you should:

- Know your rights.
- Comply with workplace safety rules and instructions.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Report any health or safety hazards to your supervisor.
- Use safety equipment (i.e., machine guards) and personal protective equipment (i.e., goggles, gloves) when required.

**your  
employer  
cannot  
legally fire  
you for  
speaking  
up or filing  
a health  
and safety  
complaint  
with osha.**

# work permits

If you are younger than 18 years of age, you must complete a work permit application and obtain a work permit before starting a new job. High school guidance counselors or job placement coordinators can help you with this application process.

## steps for getting a work permit:

- 1 First, you must have a job offer from an employer.
- 2 Next, download a work permit application from the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards website ([www.mass.gov/dos](http://www.mass.gov/dos)), or pick one up at the Superintendent of Schools' Office in the school district where you live or where you attend school.
- 3 Bring the application to your employer and have him/her complete the section, "Promise of Employment."
- 4 For 14- and 15-year-olds only (16- and 17-year-olds may skip this step): Have your doctor complete the **Physician's Certificate of Health** section. Note: The Certificate of Health must be signed within the previous 12 months of the date that you submit your application for a work permit.
- 5 You and your parent, guardian or custodian must sign the completed permit application.
- 6 Take the completed application and proof of your age (e.g., **birth certificate, passport, or immigration record**) to the Superintendent of Schools (or the person authorized to issue permits) in the school district where you live or where you attend school. The Superintendent or authorized person will then issue you a permit. No one else may pick up your permit for you.
- 7 Bring the signed work permit back to your employer who must keep it until you leave your job. Your employer is required to have your work permit on the premises at all times.

NOTE: If you are 17 years old and have documented proof of a high school diploma or the equivalent, you are entitled to a work permit without signature authorization from the Superintendent. You should still complete a work permit application and bring documentation of your high school diploma or the equivalent to the authorized school official. You will then be issued an appropriate work permit to provide to your employer.

# legal work hours

## for 14 and 15-year-olds

### work hours

During the school year: Only between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and not during school hours.

During the summer (July 1 to Labor Day): Only between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

### maximum hours

During the school year: 18 hours per week, 3 hours per day on school days, 8 hours per day on weekends and holidays, 6 days per week.

During the summer: 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day, 6 days per week

# legal work hours

## for 16 and 17-year-olds

### work hours

Year-round: Between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on nights preceding a regularly scheduled school day. If the establishment stops serving customers at 10:00 p.m., the minor may be employed until 10:15 p.m.

Between 6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. on nights not preceding a regularly scheduled school day. (Except in restaurants and racetracks, until midnight.)

### maximum hours

Year-round: 48 hours per week, 9 hours per day, 6 days per week.

After 8:00 p.m., all teens, ages 14 through 17, must be directly supervised by an adult who is located in the workplace and who is reasonably accessible (with the exception of minors who work at a kiosk, cart or stand in the common area of an enclosed shopping mall that has security from 8:00 p.m. until the mall is closed to the public).



# prohibited jobs for 14 & 15 year olds

- Operating, cleaning, or repairing power-driven machinery (except office machines or machines for retail, cleanup, or kitchen work not otherwise prohibited)
- Cooking (except on electric or gas grills that do not have open flames)
- Operating fryolators, rotisseries, NEICO broilers, or pressure cookers
- Operating, cleaning or repairing power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, processors, cutters, and mixers
- Performing any baking activities
- Operating microwave ovens (except to heat food in microwave ovens with a maximum capacity of 140° F)
- Cleaning kitchen surfaces that are hotter than 100° F
- Filtering, transporting, or disposing of cooking oil or grease hotter than 100° F
- Working in freezers or meat coolers
- Working in a manufacturing facility or occupation (e.g., in a factory; as an assembler)
- Working on or using ladders, scaffolds, or their substitutes
- Working in garages, except dispensing gas and oil
- Working in brick or lumber yards
- Working around boilers or in engine rooms
- Loading or unloading trucks, railroad cars, or conveyors
- Working in amusement places (e.g., pool or billiard room, or bowling alley)
- Working in barber shops
- Work in door-to-door street sales, including work as a sign waiver (except directly outside of employer establishment)
- Working in construction, transportation, communications, or public utilities (except doing clerical work away from heavy machinery off the job-site)
- Working in warehouses (except doing clerical work)
- Loading or unloading trucks, railroad cars, or conveyors
- Riding in or on a motor vehicle (except in passenger seat if wearing a seatbelt)
- Working doing laundry in a commercial laundry or dry cleaning establishment
- Working as a public messenger
- Working at processing operations (e.g., in meat or fish, poultry processing, cooping, cracking nuts, bulk or mass mailing)
- Doing industrial homework
- Working with dangerous electrical machinery or appliances
- Work that is determined by the Massachusetts Attorney General to be dangerous to the health and well-being of minors
- **Work in any of the occupations or tasks prohibited for persons 16 & 17 years old**

*Tasks not specifically permitted by the US DOL Secretary of Labor, are prohibited.*

# prohibited jobs for 16 & 17 year olds

- Driving a vehicle, forklift, or work assist vehicle (except golf carts in certain circumstances)
- Riding as a passenger on a forklift
- Operating, cleaning, or repairing power-driven meat slicers, grinders or choppers
- Operating, cleaning, or repairing power-driven bakery machines (except for certain countertop models and pizza dough rollers)
- Working 30 feet or more above ground or water
- Handling, serving, or selling alcoholic beverages
- Using circular, chain, or band saws; guillotine shears; wood chippers; and abrasive cutting discs
- Using power-driven woodworking machines
- Using, servicing, driving, or working from hoisting machines
- Operating or loading power-driven balers, compactors, or paper-processing machines
- Using power-driven metal-forming, punching, or shearing machines
- Using buffing or polishing equipment
- Manufacturing brick, tile, or kindred products
- Manufacturing or storing explosives
- Working in excavation, wrecking, demolition, or shipbreaking
- Working in forest fire fighting, forest fire prevention, timber track operations, and forestry service
- Working in logging, sawmilling, or mining
- Working slaughtering, packing, or processing meat and poultry
- Working in railway operations
- Working in roofing or on or about a roof
- Working in foundries or around blast furnaces
- Manufacturing phosphorus or phosphorus matches
- Working where they are exposed to radioactive substances
- Working as a firefighter or engineer on a boat
- Oiling or cleaning hazardous machinery in motion
- Work in any job requiring the possession or use of a firearm

## persons under 14 may not work!

There are a few exceptions to this such as babysitting, working as news carriers, on farms, and in entertainment (with a special permit).

The information contained on pages 5-7 is a combination of the state and federal laws. The most protective laws are presented here and apply to all employers of teens in Massachusetts including family members who employ their teenaged relatives. There are additional regulations and some exceptions for employers in agricultural industries and student learners participating in cooperative education programs.



# hazards in the workplace

Many jobs have hazards that can hurt you or make you sick. It is important to be aware of them and to speak up if you have concerns.

As a teen, it may be difficult for you to speak up in the workplace. If so, speak with a parent or other trusted adult if you feel that there are any conditions at work that are unsafe.

Here are some of the most common hazards you might find in typical teen jobs:

## physical hazards

- Lifting heavy objects
- Standing for long periods
- Excessive noise
- Extreme temperatures
- Poor lighting and ventilation
- Repetitive movements (e.g., scanning groceries)

## chemical & biological hazards

- Cleaning products
- Solvents and acids
- Gasoline
- Pesticides
- Bacteria and viruses (e.g., Hepatitis B)
- Mold and dust mites

## safety hazards

- Knives, razors, and case cutters
- Hot grease, water and steam
- Unguarded machinery
- Slippery floors
- Falling objects
- Electrical hazards
- Paper balers\*
- Motor vehicles\*

## violence hazards

- Contact with enraged customers
- Access to cash
- Unsecured working environment
- Working late at night
- Working alone

\*Use of this equipment by anyone under 18 is prohibited by law.

# reduce your risk of being hurt by workplace hazards

- Participate in training programs or request training if none is offered.
- Use proper safety techniques when performing tasks.
- Read labels and follow instructions when using chemicals.
- Ask questions if you are unsure about something.
- Keep your work area clean and neat.
- Try to keep your cool around angry customers and call on your supervisor if you feel threatened.
- Ask for help from a responsible adult such as a co-worker, parent or teacher if you need help talking to your boss.
- Call the United States Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) if your employer does not fix a safety problem.

## before beginning a new job, ask your employer:

1. What are the hazards I should be aware of in this job?
2. Will I receive health and safety training?
3. Will I need to wear any safety gear?
4. Do you have an emergency plan in place and will I be trained in emergency procedures?
5. Do you have safety meetings?

**remember...** You have the legal right to refuse to do any task that you feel threatens your immediate safety! Staff at OSHA, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, and other state and federal agencies listed at the back of this pamphlet can provide information to you or your parent/guardian.

If you are ever injured at work, you should take the following steps right away:

1. Tell your supervisor, no matter what the injury is or how serious you think it is.
2. If necessary, get medical treatment – even if it means leaving work to do so.
3. Tell your parent or guardian about your injury.

# workers compensation

The Massachusetts Workers' Compensation system is in place to make sure that workers are protected by insurance if they are injured on the job or contract a work-related illness. Under this system, employers are required by law to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage to all their employees. When you become hurt or sick because of your job, you have a right to benefits under the state's workers' compensation system. You are entitled to these rights:

- Regardless of your age or the number of hours you work per week
- No matter who or what caused your work-related injury or illness
- Even if your employer has no workers' compensation insurance
- No matter what payment method your employer uses
- Even if you are a citizen of another country

## do i need a lawyer?

You do not need a lawyer to file a workers' compensation claim. If your employer's workers' compensation insurer denies or contests your claim, then you and/or your parent or guardian may want to talk to a lawyer who has experience handling workers' compensation cases.

You may represent yourself or be represented by anyone you delegate, including an attorney. If you do get an attorney, the law requires that the insurer pay the attorney's fee if you win your case. In certain cases the insurer can reduce your payments to help pay for your legal representation. If you lose, the attorney can charge you only for very specific expenses.



## under the workers compensation law you are entitled to:

- Get medical treatment for a work-related injury and have it paid for by your employer (whether or not you lose time at work). It is illegal for your employer to ask you to use your own health insurance to pay your medical bills.
- Choose your own doctor. However, if you seek medical treatment when you first get injured, your employer has the right to send you to a doctor or hospital of its own choosing.
- Know the name of your employer's workers' compensation insurer and the policy number. Your employer should have a poster with this information displayed in the workplace.
- File a claim with your employer's workers' compensation insurer if your employer does not do so. You can contact the insurer directly or call the Department of Industrial Accidents for help with this. If you were injured while employed under conditions that violate the child labor laws you may make a claim for double compensation.
- Be paid a portion of your lost wages if you are unable to work for 5 or more calendar days because of a work-related injury or illness. The first 5 days DO NOT have to be in a row.
- Receive other benefits if you become permanently disabled. For example, you may receive compensation for loss of a body part or be given training to learn a new job.
- Return to work after you have recovered. Your employer cannot legally fire you for getting hurt at work or for missing work because of a work-related injury or illness.

**The information above applies to most situations. Some rules and exceptions not covered here may apply to you and affect your situation. To learn more, or to get help filing a claim, contact the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents ([www.mass.gov/dia](http://www.mass.gov/dia)).**

# some helpful resources

When work-related problems or questions arise, there are many people you can go to for help. The organizations listed here can help with questions on the following topics.

## child labor laws & wages

Massachusetts Attorney General's  
Office, Fair Labor Division  
(617) 727-3465

[www.mass.gov/ago/youthemployment](http://www.mass.gov/ago/youthemployment)

[www.laborlowdown.com](http://www.laborlowdown.com)

U.S. Department of Labor  
Wage and Hour Division  
(617) 624-6700

[www.dol.gov/whd](http://www.dol.gov/whd)

## discrimination at work

Massachusetts Commission  
Against Discrimination (MCAD)  
(617) 727-3990

[www.mass.gov/mcad](http://www.mass.gov/mcad)

U.S. Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
(800) 669-4000 Boston Area Office

[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

## work permits

Massachusetts Department of Labor  
Division of Occupational Safety  
(617) 626-6952

[www.mass.gov/dos](http://www.mass.gov/dos)

## health and safety

U.S. Department of Labor  
Occupational Safety and Health  
Administration (OSHA)  
(978) 837-4460 Andover Office  
(617) 565-6924 Braintree Office  
(413) 785-0123 Springfield Office

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

Massachusetts Department  
of Labor Standards  
Workplace Safety and Health Program  
(617) 969-7177

[www.mass.gov/dos](http://www.mass.gov/dos)

Massachusetts Department  
of Public Health (DPH)  
Teens at Work: Injury Surveillance  
and Prevention Project  
(617) 624-5632

[www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork](http://www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork)

## workers compensation

Massachusetts Department of Labor  
Department of Industrial Accidents  
(800) 323-3249, ext. 470

[www.mass.gov/dia](http://www.mass.gov/dia)

# additional resources

These organizations and agencies have websites with many resources and tools on workplace health and safety that you may find helpful.

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Young Worker Safety and Health Website: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth)
- U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
  - Safety and health topics website: [www.osha.gov/SLTC](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC)
  - Teen workers website: [www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers)
  - Teen worker safety in restaurants eTool: [www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant)
  - Youth in agriculture eTool: [www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/agriculture](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/agriculture)
- U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division
  - Fact sheet index website: [www.dol.gov/fact-sheets-index.htm](http://www.dol.gov/fact-sheets-index.htm)
  - YouthRules! website: [www.youthrules.dol.gov](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov)
- National Young Worker Safety Resource Center: [www.youngworkers.org/nation](http://www.youngworkers.org/nation)



**Office of Attorney General Martha Coakley**

[www.mass.gov/ago](http://www.mass.gov/ago)  
[www.mass.gov/ago/youthemployment](http://www.mass.gov/ago/youthemployment)  
[www.laborlowdown.com](http://www.laborlowdown.com)

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
Teens at Work: Injury Surveillance and Prevention Project**

[teens.atwork@state.ma.us](mailto:teens.atwork@state.ma.us)  
[www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork](http://www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork)