



## MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

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March 19, 2024

Chair McEwen, Minority Lead Dornink, and members of the Senate Labor Committee,

The Minnesota Grocers Association thanks you for the opportunity to highlight our concerns with changes to the minimum wage levels found in SF3947 and SF4019.

The Minnesota Grocers Association is the only state trade association representing the food industry of Minnesota. Minnesota has a unique culture of hundreds of hometown grocers and convenience stores, many of whom are independent, multi-generational, and locally owned. We have over 300 members with over 1,300 locations statewide, which includes food producers, manufacturers, brokers, and wholesaler members. Our industry provides over 150,000 jobs in the state – both union and non-union. The retail food industry is the backbone of Minnesota's prosperity, providing 1 out of every 20 jobs in our state.

Minnesota's food industry takes pride in offering excellent first-time jobs for employees entering the workforce. Your local grocer offers scheduling flexibility and an opportunity to master a wide range of tangible skills. This is particularly beneficial to youth workers who are balancing school work, extracurricular activities, and social obligations. Learning these skills opens doors to fulfilling careers, both within our industry and in the economy at large.

However, there are challenges that come with employing youth workers. Current state minimum wage law rightfully makes a distinction between youth and adult workers. By law, workers under 18 cannot work early, they cannot work late, they cannot work on ladders or in freezers or operate paper balers, among a long list of other restrictions on the work they can perform. For these reasons, we support the continuation of the youth minimum wage in all relevant conversations.

We thank the Department of Labor and Industry for conferring with the MGA regarding the provisions in this bill and are happy to discuss the youth minimum wage with legislators.

Sincerely,

Jamie L. Pfuhl  
President



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Tips for students with after school or summer jobs

## Age 14 or 15

You **may work** in specific jobs, including:

- Most office and retail jobs
- Most restaurant and fast food jobs serving customers
- Properly certified 15 year-olds can work as lifeguards

You **may work outside school hours**:

- Between 7 AM and 7 PM (until 9 PM from June 1st-Labor Day)
- No more than three hours on any school day (including Fridays)
- No more than 18 hours in any school week
- No more than eight hours on any non-school day
- No more than 40 hours in any non-school week

## Age 16 or 17

You **may work** any hours in any job not prohibited by law.

Dangerous jobs you **may not work** include:

- Driving or helping a driver
- Operating most power-driven machines, including grinders, mixers, saws, wood chippers, cutting machines, compactors and balers
- Operating forklifts, skid-steers, or other power-driven hoisting equipment
- Using or cleaning power-driven meat processing machines (such as meat slicers)
- Working most jobs in meat and poultry slaughtering and packing plants
- Roofing
- Excavation

## Different Rules for Work on Farms

### Age 14 or 15

- You **may work** in specific jobs **outside school hours**
- You **may not work** in certain farm jobs prohibited by law as dangerous

### Age 16 or 17

- You **may work** in any **farm job** at any time

*You may work on your family's farm at any age doing any job at any time*

Federal law restricts the **hours** and **jobs** young workers may work, but federal minimum wage and overtime rules **apply equally to all workers**.

Your state, city or county may have different employment laws. Employers must follow the law giving the greatest protection to young workers.

Visit [youthrules.gov](http://youthrules.gov) for more information.

Visit [youthrules.gov](http://youthrules.gov) for more information and resources



WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
[dol.gov/agencies/whd](http://dol.gov/agencies/whd)  
1-866-487-9243



Scan for more details  
Including the complete  
list of jobs youth **may**  
and **may not** do

# YOUTH RULES

FOR KIDS AT WORK

Each year, thousands of Minnesota teens work in part-time or summer jobs. Early work experiences can be rewarding for young workers – providing great opportunities to learn important job skills. The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry wants to help you have a safe and rewarding work experience. Below are some rights and responsibilities teens need to know about in the workplace.



## YOUR SAFETY AND HEALTH ON THE JOB

You have a right to a safe and healthy workplace. Proper safety training is a key component to help avoid injuries on the job. A recent U.S. study reported that 26 percent of workers younger than 18 years of age worked at least part of the day without an adult supervisor and as many as one-third of them reported not having any health and safety training. In Minnesota, the most common occupations for injured teens each year are cooks, food preparation workers, nursing aides and laborers.

**TIP:** To avoid injury, ask for help when you need it or if you are unsure about any job-related tasks. Most importantly, make sure you have access and training about safety gear and first-aid equipment.

## WHERE DO MOST MINNESOTA TEENS WORK?

Teens are typically employed in fast food, retail, parks and recreation, amusement parks, or federal or state youth employment programs. In Minnesota, the majority of **14- to 18-year-olds** work in lodging or food services (36 percent), retail (26 percent), and health care and social assistance (8 percent).

## WHAT HOURS CAN TEENS WORK?

If both federal and state laws apply to an employer, the more protective or stricter standard must be followed. The minimum age for most employment is **14**, unless a federal and state law exemption allows for a younger minimum age.

**FACT:** Teens working too late at night is the most common complaint state investigators hear each year.

Minors ages **14** and **15** may not work:

- before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m. with the exception of a newspaper carrier;
- more than eight hours a day, except in agriculture;
- more than 40 hours a week, except in agriculture;
- on school days during school hours, without an employment certificate issued by the school district superintendent.

During the school year, large employers (sales of more than \$500,000 annually) are prohibited from letting minors younger than **16** work later than 7 p.m., work more than three hours a day and work more than 18 hours a week.

Small employers (sales of less than \$500,000 annually) may allow minors younger than **16** to work until 9 p.m.

High school students aged **16** and **17** may not work after 11 p.m. on an evening before a school day or before 5 a.m. on a school day.



**m** DEPARTMENT OF  
LABOR AND INDUSTRY

# YOUTH RULES

FOR KIDS AT WORK

## PROHIBITED WORK

There are both federal and Minnesota child labor laws that restrict minors from working in certain hazardous jobs or conditions.

For example, teens younger than **18** may not be employed in or about construction or building projects.

Other prohibited work for minors younger than **18** includes driving passenger-carrying vehicles or working with explosives or fireworks.

Minors younger than 16 may not work with machinery such as power-driven snowblowers and other lawn and garden equipment or bakery equipment.

Other prohibited work for minors younger than **16**

includes working with laundry, rug cleaning or dry cleaning equipment; being in contact with a carwash on a mechanized conveyor line; or doing welding of any kind.

A homeowner can hire a **14-year-old** to mow his or her lawn (which is considered a home chore), but a company that hires individuals to do similar jobs may not hire a **14-year-old** to mow a lawn.

**EXEMPTIONS:** Although a minor younger than **14** may not be employed in most cases, there are exemptions, such as a newspaper carrier, actor, actress, model, agricultural field worker or youth sports official. Such exemptions require a permit from Labor Standards.

## QUESTIONS

Many of the things parents hear – and sometimes business owners hear – about labor laws are from relatives, friends or other workers' experiences, **not the actual statutes and rules**. If you have questions, contact Labor Standards.

If you have questions about workplace safety or health, contact Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at 651-284-5060, 800-657-3776 or [osha.consultation@state.mn.us](mailto:osha.consultation@state.mn.us).

## MINIMUM WAGE

Employers cannot pay teens less than the minimum wage. Employees must be paid at least the current minimum-wage rate, regardless of the method of compensation, for all hours worked, including training time.

**NO TIP CREDIT:** Minnesota does not allow for tips received by employees to be credited toward the payment of minimum wages.

**Large employer** – Any enterprise with annual gross revenues of \$500,000 (as of Jan. 1, 2024) \$10.85/hour

**Small employer** – Any enterprise with annual gross revenues of less than \$500,000 \$8.85/hour

**Training wage** – May be paid to employees aged 18 and 19 the first 90 consecutive days \$8.85/hour

**Youth wage** – May be paid to employees aged 17 or younger \$8.85/hour

## STATE AND FEDERAL CHILD LABOR LAWS

Employers are generally subject to both state child labor laws and the federal child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Certain Minnesota child labor laws are more protective than federal law and vice versa. Employers covered by both Minnesota child labor laws and the federal FLSA must follow the most protective provisions that apply to their employees. Visit [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/child-labor](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/child-labor) for more information about federal child labor law.