

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

CHILD LABOR LAW

820 ILCS 205/1-22



FY 2024 Annual Report
Administration and Enforcement Activities

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Illinois Child Labor Law regulates the employment of workers under the age of 16 and prohibits most work by children under the age of 14. The Child Labor Law seeks to ensure that child workers are working in non-hazardous conditions, receiving required meal breaks, and working during appropriate times as defined by the law.

The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) through its Fair Labor Standards Division administers and enforces the Child Labor Law. In accordance with 820 ILCS 205/18.2, the Department is required to file a report with the General Assembly by January 1 each year summarizing its activities regarding administration and enforcement of this law for the preceding fiscal year.

II. ADMINISTRATION

The Department maintains a toll-free hotline (1-800-645-5784) which is used primarily by the Issuing Officers in schools to obtain assistance when issuing employment certificates, as well as to receive complaints and provide information to the general public. The hotline number is prominently displayed on the Department's Labor Law Poster, which employers all throughout the State of Illinois are required to post. In addition to the hotline, the Department maintains the following e-mail addresses to receive inquiries and complaints regarding child labor. This includes:

- dol.childlaborquestions@illinois.gov handles general questions about child employment
- dol.childlaborcomplaints@illinois.gov handles violation of child labor law reports
- dol.childlaborlaw@illinois.gov handles the receipt of approved child work certificates

This information can also be found on the Department's website located at <https://labor.illinois.gov/laws-rules/fls/child-labor-law.html>. The website also contains FAQ's, updates, and pertinent forms.

Updates to Child Labor Law Public Act 103-0721

This past fiscal year (FY 24) IDOL worked with the Governor and the General Assembly to update the Child Labor Law, creating a more modern framework for regulation of working minors, as well as strengthening penalties for violations. The prior version of the Child Labor Law had been in effect since the 1940s and the Department sought to reorganize the text of the law for clarity and comprehensibility. SB 3646 passed the General Assembly in the spring 2024 legislative session and Public Act 103-0721 was signed by the Governor.

Key changes to the statutory language of the overhauled Child Labor Law include:

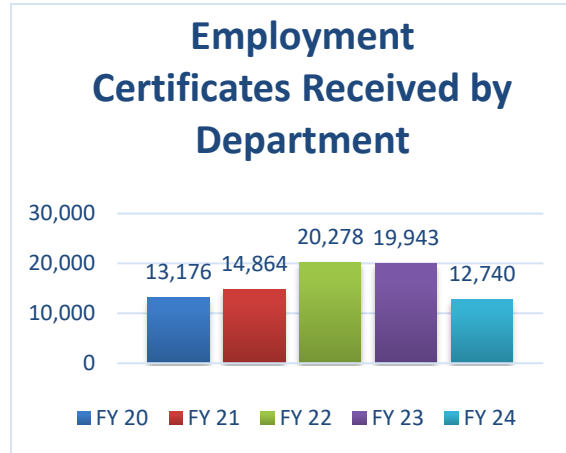
- Updates to the list of restricted and prohibited occupations;
- Adding prohibitions on retaliation against those that report alleged violations of the law;
- Increased civil penalties for violations of the Act or a rule adopted under the Act, of up to \$20,000 per violation and up to \$60,000 for violations involving the illness, injury, or death of a minor.

These changes will take effect January 1, 2025 and IDOL's Fair Labor Standards Division has been taking necessary steps to implement the changes.

Employment Certificates & Registered Issuing Officers

School issuing officers review requests for child labor employment certificates and are required to send copies of all employment certificates issued to IDOL. In FY 24, the Department received 12,740 employment certificates issued by schools and their authorized agents. This represents a decrease

of 7,203 certificates from FY 2023 (19,943). Once the Department receives a copy of a certificate, that certificate remains on file with the Department in accordance with its records retention policies.



In FY 2024, the Department recorded 162 new issuing officers throughout the State, bringing the total to 4,367 registered officers. Issuing officers are authorized by the Regional or District Superintendent of Schools to issue employment certificates to minors who wish to work.

III. ENFORCEMENT

The Department conducts investigations where violations of the Child Labor Law are alleged or suspected. In FY 2024, the Department collected \$14,500 in penalties. The industries in which the Department identified violations leading to penalties were restaurants and entertainment & leisure.

Penalties collected under this Act are deposited into the Child Labor and Day and Temporary Labor Enforcement Fund to fund future outreach, compliance, or enforcement activities. Settlement amounts are determined by the size of the business and the gravity of the violation.

IV. OUTREACH EFFORTS

In FY 24, as part of regular and ongoing outreach efforts, the Department attended several events in which we were able to both present information in Q & A sessions and provide informational materials to attendees.

Additionally, in FY 24 the Department created a pilot grant program to raise awareness of Child Labor Law and other workplace protections among particularly vulnerable migrant workers in the Chicagoland area. Through this program IDOL partnered with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) and community organization sub-grantees to provide training on child labor protections. In total, 55 child labor presentations were conducted reaching 1,458 individuals.

V. CONCLUSION

In the coming year, the Department looks to continue these innovative community-based outreach efforts to workers; focus on compliance assistance to employers to ensure that they are aware of the updates to the Child Labor Law; and continue its enforcement efforts. By pairing these outreach, compliance, and enforcement strategies, the Department will continue to combat exploitation of minors in the workplace.