



Illinois Child Labor Law Resource for Parents & Families



All Child Workers Have Legal Rights

- To be paid a minimum \$13 per hour for all hours worked
- To have a 30-minute break for every 5 hours worked
- To attend school

Age Requirements

The Child Labor Law regulates the employment of workers under 16 years of age. Employers are allowed to hire 14 and 15-year-olds if the work meets the requirements of the law. Employers are not allowed to hire children 13 and younger except in specific circumstances such as agriculture, performing in the entertainment industry, working at a park district or golf course, or delivering newspapers.

Work Hours

- Employers may not allow children to work before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m., except from June 1 - Labor Day when work is allowed until 9 p.m.
- Employers must provide all children under 16 with a minimum 30-minute meal break for every 5 hours worked.
- On any day of the week, a child's school time plus work time cannot be more than 8 hours.
- A child cannot work more than 6 consecutive days.

Prohibited Hazardous Occupations

Employers may not allow children to work in dangerous environments, such as:

- work in/around exposed power-driven machinery (except ice cream shops);
- any hazardous factory work;
- work around materials such as explosives, alcohol, oil & gas, spray paint, lead, or other dangerous chemicals;
- metalworking or woodworking;
- laundry;
- construction; and
- meat/fish processing.

Protections for Child Workers

- The Illinois Department of Labor will only take enforcement action against employers, not child workers or their families.
- Every worker is entitled to legal protections, regardless of immigration or work authorization status.
- Please contact the Illinois Department of Labor if you suspect or have concerns about an employer who may be illegally employing children.
- The Illinois Department of Labor does not ask about the immigration/work authorization status of workers and does not report any information to immigration authorities.
- It is a violation of Illinois Child Labor Law to retaliate, take adverse action or discriminate against a child worker if they exercise a right under the child labor law. (e.g. file a complaint, cooperate with an investigation, testify in any related legal proceeding)



Contact Numbers

Child Labor Information:
(312) 793-5570
Child Labor HOTLINE:
(800) 645-5784 (toll-free)

Contact Email:

General Child Labor Questions:
dol.childlaborquestions@illinois.gov
To report possible child labor violations:
dol.childlaborcomplaints@illinois.gov

