

Prohibited Jobs for Minors

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).

Persons under 16 may NOT:

- Operate 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 or choppers
 - 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 (e.g., a factory)
 - Work on ladders or scaffolds
 - 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
 - Wash windows in public or commercial buildings if the 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**
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Persons under 18 may NOT:

- Drive a vehicle or forklift (except golf carts in certain circumstances)
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven meat slicers, grinders or choppers
- Operate, clean or repair power-driven bakery machines
- Work 30 feet or more above ground or water
- Handle, serve, or sell alcoholic beverages
- Use circular or band saws, or guillotine shears
- Use power-driven woodworking machines
- Use hoisting machines
- Operate paper balers, paper box compactors, or other power-driven paper products 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 logging, sawmilling, or mining
- Work slaughtering, packing, or processing meat
- 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

* This is a compilation of the state and federal child labor 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.

Legal Work Hours for Minors

14 & 15 Year Olds

Work Hours

During the school year:

Only between 7 am & 7 pm

Not during school hours

During the summer (July 1 - Labor Day):

Only between 7 am & 9 pm

Maximum Hours

When school IS in session:

18 hours per week

3 hours per day on school days

8 hours per day on weekends and holidays

6 days per week

When school IS NOT in session:

40 hours per week

8 hours per day

6 days per week

16 & 17 Year Olds

Work Hours

ALL year round:

- Only between 6 am & 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 & 11:30 pm on nights *not* preceding a regularly scheduled school day, except in restaurants and race tracks until midnight

Maximum Hours

ALL year round:

48 hours per week

9 hours per day

6 days per week

Work Permits

All teens under 18 must obtain a work permit from the school district where they live or go to school. For more information, visit the website of the Division of Occupational Safety at: www.mass.gov/dos/youth.

Supervision

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).

Resources for More Information

For questions about wages or child labor laws:

Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General

Fair Labor Division

(617) 727-3465

www.mass.gov/ago/youthemployment

U.S. Department of Labor

Wage and Hour Division

(617) 624-6700

www.dol.gov/esa/whd

For questions about workers' compensation:

Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents

(800) 323-3249 x470

www.mass.gov/dia

For questions about health and safety:

Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Methuen Office - (617) 565-8110

Braintree Office - (617) 565-6924

Springfield Office - (413) 785-0123

www.osha.gov

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Occupational Health Surveillance Program
*Teens at Work Injury Surveillance and
Prevention Project*
(617) 624-5632
www.mass.gov/dph/teensatwork

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