

Age Matters: Employment of Young People 14 and 15 Years of Age in Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, *The Labour Standards Act* and its regulations set minimum standards for wages and working conditions for most employers and employees.

Minimum age of employment in Saskatchewan

All employers in Saskatchewan regulated by *The Labour Standards Act* must follow the minimum age of employment rules.

The minimum age at which young people in Saskatchewan can begin to work is 16 years.

Young people aged 14 and 15 years of age can work if they:

- have written consent from their parent or guardian; and
- beginning on March 31, 2010, complete the **Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course (YWRCC)** provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/youth-at-work.

Young people under the age of 14 cannot work unless the employer applies for and receives a special permit from the Director of Labour Standards.

Specific employment requirements for 14 and 15 year olds.

14 and 15 year olds cannot work:

- after 10 p.m. the evening before a school day;
- before classes begin on a school day; and
- more than 16 hours during a school week.

These restrictions apply in any week where there is a school day. Hours of work restrictions do not apply during school holidays and extended breaks from school. During holidays, 14 and 15 year olds can work the same hours as other employees.

Exemptions

These rules do not apply to sectors exempted from *The Labour Standards Act* and Regulations such as:

- family businesses employing only immediate family;
- the self employed;
- traditional farming operations;
- babysitters; and
- newspaper carriers.

However, occupational health and safety rights and responsibilities apply to employers, workers and the self-employed regardless of their age or industry. Occupational health and safety legislation restricts employment in some sectors. For the specific sectors see the section "Minimum age requirements under other laws remain" on the next page.

Please note that Labour Standards regulations that govern overtime, rest periods and the minimum wage apply to all workers regardless of age.

Parent or guardian written consent

An employer must receive the written permission of a young person's parent or guardian before employing 14 and 15 year olds. The consent of only one parent or guardian is required.

Parents and guardians do not have to use a specific prescribed consent form, but they must give the employer written consent. See **Information for Parents and Guardians** at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/toolkit-information-parents-guardians for a sample parental consent form and more information about this requirement.



Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course (YWRCC)

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour offers a work readiness course to inform young people about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace under Occupational Health and Safety and Labour Standards legislation. Upon successful completion of the course, young people will receive a certificate.

Starting March 31, 2010, all 14 and 15 year olds who want to work must have a certificate. Employers will need to keep their workers' certificates on file.

For more information about the course, its availability and the certificate, see **Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course** at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/toolkit-ywrcc.

Responsibilities of employers

The regulations require that the employer maintain the parental consent form on the employee's file for each employee under the age of 16, as well, a copy of their 14 and 15 year old employees' certificates.

Employers must continue to meet their obligations to young workers under occupational health and safety legislation as well as other laws. For example, the **Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course** does not remove the employer's duty to provide on-the-job safety training or supervision. A young person should be under the direct and immediate supervision of an experienced and competent adult at all times while working.

Permits

Employers can apply for a permit from the Director of Labour Standards in special circumstances that would allow:

- the youth to work before classes begin on a school day;
- the youth to work past 10:00 pm on the evening before a school day;
- the youth to work more than 16 hours in a week when school is in session;
- an employer to employ a youth less than 14 years of age; and
- the youth to work without having completed the work readiness course.

Minimum age requirements under other laws remain

Minimum age of employment restrictions under other laws are unchanged and include the following.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993

The Act restricts employment of young people under the age of 16:

- On construction sites;
- In the production process at a pulp mill, sawmill or woodworking establishment;
- In a production process at a smelter, foundry, refinery or metal processing or fabricating operation;
- In a confined space;
- In a production process in a meat, fish or poultry processing plant;
- In a forestry or logging operation;
- On a drilling or servicing rig;
- As an operator of powered mobile equipment, crane or hoist;
- Where exposure to a chemical or biological substance is likely to endanger the health or safety of the person; and
- On a power line or construction maintenance.

The Act also restricts employment of those under the age of 18 in these occupations:

- Underground or in an open pit at a mine;
- As a radiation worker;
- In an asbestos process;
- In a silica process; and
- Where use of an atmosphere-supplying respirator is required.

The Education Act

Young people under 16 years of age must have the permission of their principal to work during school hours.

The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act

The Act restricts the age of a person who may work in the sale, handling, or service of alcohol to age 19.

For more information

The Ministry has prepared a series of Labour Standards and occupational health and safety legislation tip sheets to help young workers, parents and employers understand their responsibilities. These sheets can be downloaded from the Youth at Work website at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/youth-at-work. You may also wish to visit the occupational health and safety website at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/ohs or the labour standards website at www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/lis.