

CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER OF MINNESOTA

Know Your Rights

right to WORK

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INFORM  
NAVIGATE  
EMPOWER



# I want to work, but I'm a minor.

There can be both advantages and disadvantages to working as a minor. Some restrictions apply to all workers under age 18, while others vary according to other ages. Here are some guidelines:

I'm **under 11 years old**.  
What kind of jobs can I have?

**You cannot be employed,**  
EXCEPT as  
An entertainer or model OR  
A babysitter OR  
A household worker  
doing home chores.

I'm **11 years old or older**.  
What kind of jobs can I have?

**You can have any of the above jobs,**  
as well as work as  
A newspaper carrier OR  
A youth athletic program referee.

I'm **12 years old or older**.  
What kind of jobs can I have?

**You can have any of the above jobs,**  
as well as work in some agricultural jobs.

**If you are under 18, you can never hold a job that:**  
**is hazardous, such as welding or manufacturing**  
**OR**  
**involves serving alcohol or working at a place that serves alcohol, though certain places like restaurants may be ok.**

**How many hours can I work? During what hours am I allowed to work?**

If you are under 16, you:

May not work before 7am or after 9pm.

May not work more than 40 hours a week.

May not work more than 8 hours a day.

May not work during school hours on school days,

*unless you get an employment certificate from your school district.*

If you are under 18, you:

May not work after 11pm the night before a school day, *but a parent or guardian may give you permission to work until 11:30pm.*

May not work before 5am on a school day, unless you are doing agricultural work or home chores, or working as an entertainer, model, newspaper carrier, or babysitter.

*A parent or guardian may give you permission to start work at 4:30am.*

**Does my employer have to give me breaks?**

Your employer must give you time to use the bathroom during each 4-hour period you work. If you work 8 hours, your employer must give you a meal break, but does not have to pay you for time during the meal break.

**What if I get injured while working?**

If you get hurt at your job, you may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. You should report the injury to your employer immediately, and report your claim to the state.

**When can I quit my job?**

**Do I need a good reason?**

Employment in Minnesota is "at will," so you can quit your job for any reason, whenever you want. You should still consider repercussions, such as whether you will want a recommendation or reference from your employer.

**For what reasons can I be fired?**

Employers can fire you for any LEGAL reason, or even for no reason at all. However, they cannot fire you or discriminate against you in any way based on your race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

This would be employment discrimination.

**What is employment discrimination?**

Employers are not allowed to make a decision to hire, fire, promote, pay, compensate, or provide other job benefits based on the employee's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

This is ILLEGAL discrimination, and if you feel you have been discriminated against in this way, you should contact a lawyer.

