

## South Carolina Working Teens: Protect Yourself and Know Your Rights!

Did you know that 70 teens die from work injuries in the United States every year? Hundreds more are hospitalized, and tens of thousands require treatment in hospital emergency rooms.

*A 17-year-old assistant manager of a South Carolina fast-food restaurant was shot and killed in an armed robbery. An 18-year-old employee was also shot, but survived (2000).*

*A 16-year-old youth died in South Carolina from a fall at a construction site. He and his father were working with a subcontractor, helping to build condominiums when he fell two stories (2004).*



### Why do teens get hurt on the job?

- Asked to do dangerous jobs
- Asked to use dangerous equipment
- Inadequate training
- Poor supervision
- Unsafe equipment
- Working too many hours/fatigue
- Working alone
- Unsafe work environment

Know the possible hazards at work to prevent injuries.

Types of Work

Examples of Some Types of Hazards

<b>Restaurants/ Fast food/ Bakeries</b>	Working alone, working at night, assault, hot cooking equipment, slippery floors, cleaning chemicals, slicing machines, grease, dough mixers.
<b>Retail stores/ Grocery stores:</b>	Working alone, working at night, assault, heavy lifting, box crushers, certain types of equipment (e.g. slicers, dough mixers, paper balers).
<b>Janitorial/ Maintenance work:</b>	Working alone, hazardous chemicals, heavy lifting, slippery floors, blood on discarded needles, electricity.
<b>Landscaping/ Home Repair</b>	Working alone, operating heavy machinery, electricity, heavy lifting, constant loud noise.
<b>Construction site</b>	Working alone, working at heights, working in trenches, working with heavy equipment, contact with power tools or electricity, lifting heavy objects, slipping,
<b>Driving and delivery</b>	Traffic crashes, heavy lifting, assault.
<b>Agriculture</b>	Using heavy equipment, working in grain bins, working at heights, working with large animals, driving trucks, using power devices, sunburn, lifting,



## What are my rights on the job?

You have the right to:

- ❑ Be in a safe workplace
- ❑ Refuse to work if you feel unsafe
- ❑ Speak up! (see contact information below)
- ❑ Work the hours and the jobs deemed safe by the law
- ❑ Use safety equipment
- ❑ Get safety training
- ❑ Receive at least minimum wage
- ❑ Ask for payment for medical care (workers' compensation) if you get injured or sick because of your job.
- ❑ Work without racial or sexual harassment

## Is it OK to Do Any Kind of Work?

No! There are laws that protect teens from doing dangerous work.

In South Carolina no worker under 18 may work in jobs declared hazardous.

Hazardous jobs include:

- Demolition
- Mining
- Logging
- Many power-driven machines
- Working with radioactive materials
- Meat packaging
- Manufacturing brick or tile
- Explosives
- Excavation
- Working with power saws
- Roofing

In addition, workers 14 or 15 years old may not work in jobs involving:

- ❑ Warehousing and storage
- ❑ Work involving the use of ladders and scaffolding (platform and its supporting structure used for supporting employees, materials or both)
- ❑ Use, repair, or cleaning of any power driven machines other than office machines
- ❑ Operation of motor vehicles
- ❑ Most cooking and baking
- ❑ Machine repair/ maintenance
- ❑ Loading/ unloading goods
- ❑ Work in freezers and meat coolers
- ❑ Work in or around boiler/engine rooms
- ❑ Construction

What if I am under 14?

There are even stricter laws to protect your health and safety.

“With few exceptions, no employment is permitted for minors under the age of 14.”

For more information on jobs that teenagers can legally work, check

<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/labor/index.asp?file=c11.htm>”

## What Hours Can I Work?

	Ages 14 and 15	Ages 16 and 17
Work hours	Between 7 am and 7 pm during the school year, but not during school hours. Between 7 am and 9 pm during the summer.	You are exempt from the hour and scheduling restrictions, and you may work as many daily and weekly hours as the job responsibilities require or the employer requests.
Maximum hours when school is in session	Up to 18 hours a week, but not over: 3 hours a day on school days 8 hours a day Saturday-Sunday and holidays	
Maximum hours when school is <i>not</i> in session	40 hours a week 8 hours a day	

## **What are my safety responsibilities on the job?**

- ❑ Follow safety rules and practices for your job
- ❑ Use safety equipment and protective clothing when needed or required
- ❑ Ask questions
- ❑ Tell your supervisor or parent if you feel unsafe or know of safety hazards at work
- ❑ Be aware of your environment
- ❑ Know your state and federal child labor laws
- ❑ Help other workers know their rights and be safe

## **What are my employer's safety responsibilities?**

- Provide a safe work environment
- Provide me with adequate training on how to do my job safely
- Provide me with adequate supervision
- Provide me with breaks
- Provide me necessary safety equipment
- Provide medical attention if I get hurt
- Help me with my safety concerns

## **What if I get hurt on the job?**

1. Tell your supervisor right away. Tell your parents or guardians too.
2. Get emergency medical treatment if needed.
3. Your employer must give you a claim form or you must go to <http://www.wcc.state.sc.us/foryou.htm> or call (803) 737-5723

## **Workers' Compensation: Did you know?**

- ❑ You can receive benefits even if you are under 18 and even if you are a temporary or part-time worker
- ❑ You receive full benefits no matter who was at fault for your job injury
- ❑ You do not have to be a legal resident of the U.S. to receive workers' compensation benefits
- ❑ You cannot sue your employer for a job injury, in most cases
- ❑ It is illegal for your employer to fire or punish you for reporting a workplace problem or injury, for claiming workers' compensation.

## **What if I need help with a safety problem?**

Can I be fired if I report a safety problem?

What should I do if I think my employer is violating safety regulations?

What should I do if I am asked to work more hours than are allowed under the law?

What should I do if I am asked to work "off the clock"?

- ❑ Talk to your supervisor
- ❑ Talk to your parents or teachers
- ❑ Contact one of the following agencies (see next page)

## **Important contact information!**

Questions on Legal Work for Teens and Wage or Work Problems  
South Carolina Office of Wages and Child Labor  
<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/Labor/index.asp?file=wagesmain.htm>  
(803)-896-7756

South Carolina Department of Labor  
<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/>  
Main Office (803)-896-4300

General Workplace Safety Problems  
South Carolina OSHA (Occupational Safety and Hazard Association)  
<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/osha.asp>  
(803)-896-7688

South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission  
<http://www.wcc.state.sc.us/>  
(803)- 737-5700

Sexual Harassment or Discrimination Assistance  
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
<http://youth.eeoc.gov/>  
1-800-669-4000  
Greenville Office <http://www.eeoc.gov/greenville/index.html>  
(864)-241-4400  
Savannah Office <http://www.eeoc.gov/savannah/index.html>  
(912) 652-4234

## **Other Helpful Websites:**

Teen Workers  
<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/index.html>

Youth 2 Work  
<http://www.youth2work.gov/index.htm>  
(has a link to Youth Rules)

Youth Rules!

<http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/>

Agricultural jobs and work on family farms

<http://www.dol.gov/>

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/agriculture/index.html>