

Demystifying Youth Apprenticeship

Labor Law & Liability Facts for Employers

Youth apprenticeship is a workforce development model through which young people ages 16-24 can build industry-specific knowledge and skills and earn job-related credentials. This resource provides insights regarding key aspects of youth labor law and liability, federal and state policies, and promising approaches for leading successful programs. When considering federal and state laws, employers should follow whichever one is the strictest.



Work Hours

At the federal level, there are no work [hour restrictions](#) for anyone who's 16 or older. But regulations may be stricter at the state level. And no matter what the law may be, employers should be mindful of students' needs to attend school and participate in extracurricular activities.



Insurance & Workers' Compensation

[Workers' Compensation](#) laws are set at the state level, and rules vary from state to state. But in most cases, the laws don't exclude minors from coverage. Many businesses carry corporate insurance that provides employers with additional protection. And some schools and school districts provide insurance that covers students participating in youth apprenticeships at employers' facilities.



Exemptions

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) provides *limited exemptions* to rules barring youth from several hazardous occupations if the workers are at least 16 years old and are enrolled in certain approved programs, including Registered Apprenticeships.



Safety

The Occupational Safety and Health Act sets safety standards for all employees, including minors. Above all, employers should provide every worker with safety training and ensure that they're aware of communication channels. There are no additional federal safety regulations beyond what's in the act, but there are additional considerations employers should keep in mind when [hiring young people](#).



Hazardous Occupations

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) prohibits employers from hiring young people for certain occupations that are considered hazardous. This U.S. Department of Labor [web page](#), provides further details, including guidance about exemptions.



Resources

- [U.S. Department of Labor Child Labor Information](#)
- [State Youth Labor Law and Workers' Compensation Table](#)
- [State Policy Playbook to Advance Youth Apprenticeship](#)
- [Rules and Regulations for Youth Employment](#)
- [Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938](#)

This project has been funded, either wholly or in part, with federal funds from the Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration under contract number GS10F0094X. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of the same by the U.S. Government.