

[www.safeteen.org](http://www.safeteen.org)



45 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
1-877-SAFE-345  
TTY: 1-800-794-1110



**A Guide for Working Teens**

**Respect yourself. Protect yourself.**

**safeteen**

A program of the  
Maine Department of Labor



safetean

## Are You Working Now or Looking for a Job?

Approximately 80% of teenagers have had a job by the time they graduate from high school.

While work has many benefits, it also has risks.

### Nearly 200,000 teens in the U.S. are injured on the job every year.

About 150 Maine teens are injured badly enough to lose time from work each year.

Maine and federal child labor laws are in place to protect you on the job and to make sure that work doesn't interfere with your education. Here are some of the things you should know.

The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

**Telephone: (207) 624-6400; TTY: 1-800-794-1110; e-mail: [webmaster\\_bls@state.me.us](mailto:webmaster_bls@state.me.us)**





**Labor laws PROTECT  
you from doing  
dangerous work.**

**In Maine, no one under 18 years  
old may do work that involves:**

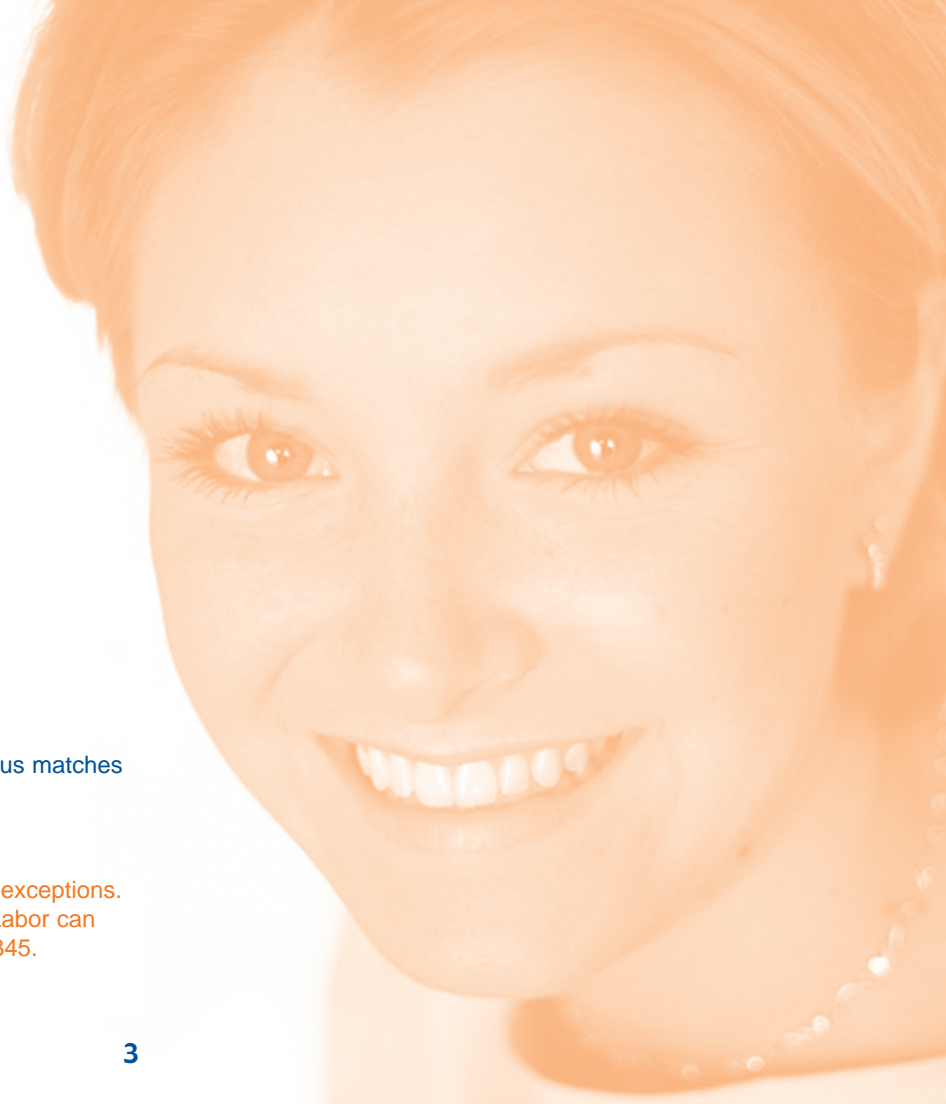
- Driving a vehicle or forklift
- Using meat slicers or power-driven bakery machines
- Serving or selling alcoholic beverages (17-year-olds can serve or sell liquor if supervised by someone 21 or older)
- Using a circular saw, band saw, guillotine shears, or a box crusher
- Using power-driven woodworking machines
- Working in wrecking, demolition, ship-breaking, or excavation
- Exposure to radioactive substances or pesticides
- Using power-driven paper-products machines





- Using power-driven metal-forming, punching, or shearing machines
- Manufacturing brick, tile, or similar products
- Manufacturing explosives or storing explosives
- Mining, logging, or sawmilling
- Using a power-driven hoisting apparatus
- Slaughtering, packing, or processing meat
- Most roofing or railway operations
- Working in foundries or around blast furnaces
- Manufacturing hazardous products such as phosphorus matches
- Working as a firefighter or engineer on a boat
- Working alone in a cash-based business

NOTE: This is not a complete list and there are some exceptions. Rules differ for farm work. The Maine Department of Labor can give you more information. Call toll-free 1-877-SAFE-345. TTY: 1-800-794-1110 (For deaf and hard of hearing)



## **NO ONE under 16 years old may do work that involves:**

- Any work in a manufacturing facility (e.g. factory)\*
- Operating any power-driven machinery (except machines in offices, retail stores, and food service, and gasoline pumps)
- Cooking (except at soda fountains, lunch counters, snack bars, or cafeteria serving counters) or baking
- Working in freezers or meat coolers
- Working in construction, transportation, communications, or public utilities
- Working in warehouses (except clerical)
- Loading or unloading trucks, railroad cars, or conveyors
- Working on ladders or scaffolds
- Washing windows in a public or commercial building if the window sill is more than 10 feet above the ground
- Laundering in a commercial laundry or dry cleaning establishment
- Working in a pool room, billiard room, or bowling alley



- Working as a public messenger or chamber maid
- Any processing operations (as in meat, fish, or poultry processing or cracking nuts)\*
- Working in a hotel or motel (except 15-year-olds can work in the office, lobby, kitchen, or dining room)
- Any mining
- Working around boilers or in engine rooms
- Doing industrial homework
- Handling, serving or selling alcoholic beverages (15-year-olds can handle liquor—stocking and carrying, for example—but not serve or sell it)
- Any of the occupations prohibited for all minors under the age of 18
- Any work that the Maine Department of Labor determines to be dangerous to the health and well-being of minors

\*Except in office, retail, or customer service/sales areas, in a separate room away from manufacturing or processing operations, or outside in non-hazardous work on the grounds.

## **Persons under 14 may not work in most businesses.**

There are a few exception to this, e.g. as news carriers, on farms, and in entertainment.

**NOTE:** This is not a complete list and there are some exceptions. Rules differ for farm work. The Maine Department of Labor can give you more information. Call toll-free 1-877-SAFE-345. TTY: 1-800-794-1110 (For deaf and hard of hearing)





## How many HOURS can I work? How LATE can I work?

Labor laws protect teens from working too long, too late, or too early. (There are some exceptions to the hours listed. Call for details.)

### 16–17 Years Old (enrolled in school, including home school)

You can work:

Up to 4 hours on a school day; 8 hours on the last school day of the week

Up to 20 hours in any week with 3 or more school days

Except: 8 hours each day with unscheduled school closure for a total of 28 hours that week (e.g., storm day, broken furnace, etc.)

Up to 50 hours each week with less than 3 scheduled school days, or during the first or last week of the school year

Up to 10 hours a day on weekends, holidays, vacations, teacher workshop days

No more than 6 days in a row

How early? How late?

Not before 7 a.m. on a school day

Not before 5 a.m. on a non-school day

Not after 10 p.m. the night before a school day

Until midnight if there is no school the next day

Minors under 17 cannot work during school hours



### Under 16 (work permit required!)

You can work:

Up to 3 hours a day on school days, including Fridays

Up to 18 hours in any week with one or more school days

Up to 8 hours on days without school (during weekends, holidays, vacations, storm days, etc.)

Up to 40 hours in a week with no school days

Never more than 6 days in a row

How early? How late?

Between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. during summer vacations only

Not during school hours

## Do I need a WORK PERMIT? **YES!**

**If you are under 16, you must get a work permit before you begin a new job.**

You can have one permit during the school year, two in the summer. You must get a new permit every time you begin a new job until you become 16 years old. If you are under 16, you must have a work permit even if you are no longer attending school. Check with the school department in your town to find out where to get a work permit. Your high school guidance counselor or job placement coordinator may also be of help.

### Steps for Getting a Work Permit

**1** You need an employer to offer you a job first.

**2** To apply for the permit, go to your school's Superintendent's Office with proof of your age and your social security number. Ask your parent or guardian to come with you to sign the permit. If your parent or guardian cannot come with you, ask them for a signed note that says it's okay with them for you to get the permit. Bring the note with you to the Superintendent's Office.

**3** You cannot start work until the Maine Department of Labor approves your permit. This takes about a week.

**Protect yourself. Ask questions. Know your rights.**

**1-877-SAFE-345**  
**[www.safeteen.org](http://www.safeteen.org)**



## You have a RIGHT to:

- A safe and healthful workplace.
- Information and training about hazards at work, including any chemicals you might use.
- At least the minimum wage. Call the Maine Department of Labor for the current minimum wage.
- Payment for all hours worked. You are entitled to 1.5 times your pay for each hour over 40 that you work in a week in most businesses.
- Payment for medical care if you get hurt or sick because of your job.  
You may also be entitled to lost wages.

## You also have a right to:

- Express your concerns about health and safety.
- File a complaint with OSHA about health and safety problems.
- Work without racial or sexual harassment.
- Join or organize a union.
- Refuse to work if the job is immediately dangerous to your life or health.
- Not be fired for speaking up about health and safety concerns.

## You have a RESPONSIBILITY to:

- Know your rights.
- Comply with workplace safety rules and instructions.
- Use safety equipment and protective clothing (when required).
- Keep work areas clean and neat. This promotes safety.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Report any injury or hazard to your supervisor.
- Speak up if you see something that is unsafe.

## What Hazards Might I Find at Work?

Most jobs have hazards—things that can hurt you or make you sick. It is important to be aware of hazards in a workplace and to speak up when you have a concern. Examples of workplace hazards are: slippery floors, hot surfaces, chemicals, noise, unguarded machinery, knives, tools and equipment, repetitive work, heavy lifting, and stress.

## What If I Get Hurt at Work?

You should tell your employer as quickly as possible about your injury and get medical treatment. Under the Maine Workers' Compensation Law, you are entitled to receive medical treatment for a work-related injury at no charge. If you miss seven or more days of work because of the injury, you may also be entitled to receive 80% of your wages while you are out of work.

## Resources

For questions about wages or the child labor laws, call:

**Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards,  
Wage and Hour Division**

207-624-6410 • TTY 1-800-794-1110

web site: <http://janus.state.me.us/labor/blsmain.htm>

**U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division**

207-780-3344 or 207-945-0330

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

For questions about workplace health and safety, call:

**SafetyWorks!, Maine Department of Labor**

207-624-6400 or 1-877-SAFE-345 • TTY 1-800-794-1110

web site: <http://janus.state.me.us/labor/blsmain.htm>

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**

Portland Office • 207-780-3178

Bangor Office • 207-941-8177

web site: <http://www.osha.gov>

**Young Worker Safety and Health Network**

web site: <http://www.stw.ed.gov/youngworkers/index.htm>

**safeteen**  
**www.safeteen.org**

For questions about discrimination at work, call:

**Maine Human Rights Commission**

207-624-6050 • TTY 207-624-6064

**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**

617-565-3200 or 1-800-669-4000

For questions about workers' compensation, call:

**Maine Workers' Compensation Board**

207-287-2308 • TTY 207-287-6119

Local Offices

Augusta 1-800-400-6854

Caribou 1-800-400-6855

Bangor 1-800-400-6856

Lewiston 1-800-400-6857

Portland 1-800-400-6858

web site: <http://janus.state.me.us/wcb/>

For more information about the safeteen program,  
call **SafetyWorks!**, Maine Department of Labor at  
207-624-6400 or 1-877-SAFE-345 or visit our web site at  
<http://www.safeteen.org>