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#20-029

Teen work hours limited during school days, even with remote learning

TUMWATER - The start of the school year soon means a return to limits on the number of hours teens can work, even with remote or virtual learning.

“We’re already receiving questions from businesses about the hours students are allowed to work,” said Josie Bryan, Youth Employment specialist with the [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#). “It’s important for students to have time for homework and school. Jobs should be scheduled around their school day.”

Here’s what the start of the school year means for teens and employers:

For teens

A teen between 14-15 years of age can work no more than 16 hours a week. It breaks down to no more than three hours a day, six days a week, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

A student age 16-17 can work no more than 20 hours a week. That breaks down to no more than four hours a day, six days a week, between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Teens who work in a restaurant, retail, or other service businesses after 8 p.m. must have adult supervision. Employers can obtain [a minor work variance](#) to extend the daily and total hours for these teens with an application to L&I.

[Work hours for teens](#) are the same whether they’re enrolled in a public or private school, or homeschooled.

For employers

Employers must complete and sign a [Parent/School Authorization](#) form before giving it to the teen’s parents and school district for their signatures. Employers should contact their local school district for information about when school starts. The form must be renewed annually by Sept. 30.

Employers also must have a [minor work permit](#). This permit is available from the state Department of Revenue/Business License Service and must be renewed every year.

“These rules help keep teens safe and let parents and the school know what work the youth is doing,” Bryan explained.

In 2019, 673 youth age 17 and under, reported injuries on the job in Washington.

More information about work requirements for teens is available [L&I’s teen workers website](#). You can also contact L&I about these issues by sending a note to the [L&I Teen Workers mailbox](#).

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