



This factsheet has been prepared for general information purposes. It is not a legal document. Please refer to the *Employment Standards Act* and Regulation for purposes of interpretation and application of the law.

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Employment of Young People: A Guide for Parents

Under the B.C. *Employment Standards Act*, children who are 12 or older, but have not yet turned 15, cannot be employed without the written consent of a parent or legal guardian. Children under 12 years of age cannot be employed without a child employment permit issued by the Director of Employment Standards.

The following information and suggestions should assist parents in making a decision whether or not to permit their 12 to 14 year-old child to be employed.

- Meet the prospective employer and discuss the supervision arrangements. The law requires that an employee who is under 15 year of age be under the direct supervision of an adult (19 years or older) at all times while at work.
- Give the employer contact information for you or another responsible adult in case of emergency.
- Show the employer proof of your child's age. The employer may want to make a photocopy for his or her records.
- Ensure that your child will have safe and reliable transportation at all times to and from work and will not be travelling alone in early morning or late evening.
- Ask the employer to describe the specific job duties your child will perform and the hours your child will be expected to work.
- When you visit the workplace where your child will be employed, ensure he or she will not work near obvious hazards such as power tools or sharp implements such as knives or saws, hot grills, deep fryers or boiling water. Ensure he or she will not be exposed to hazardous substances such as chemicals in cleaning agents or other products. Discuss any concerns you have with the employer.
- Ask the employer what tools or equipment your child may be using or have access to and what training may be required.
- Ask the employer what workplace safety training and Workplace Hazardous Materials training your child will receive, and who will be doing the training.
- If any special safety clothing or equipment such as steel-toed boots or latex gloves will be required, consider whether that work environment is appropriate for your child.

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- Ask if your child is expected to wear a uniform, and who will be responsible for cleaning and maintaining the uniform.
- Ask for the full name and phone number of the employer's representative to be contacted in the event of illness, or other issues relating to your child's employment.
- Ask if your child will have a comprehensive orientation session so he or she is comfortable in the workplace.
- Ask what wage rate your child will be receiving, what the pay schedule is, and familiarize your child with his or her rights under the *Employment Standards Act*.
- Ask about work breaks your child will take, such as lunch breaks and whether the breaks are paid.
- Discuss the importance of school with your child, and ask the school to contact you with any concerns that employment is negatively impacting your child's grades or attendance.
- After seeing the workplace and speaking to the employer you should assess whether your child has the necessary maturity or physical ability to follow instructions and perform the assigned tasks.

Additional Resources

The Employment Standards website (www.gov.bc.ca/EmploymentStandards) contains links to the *Employment Standards Act* and Regulation, our interpretation guidelines manual and various factsheets.

Also, specific provisions apply to certain employment sectors such as the film and television industry. More information is available at www.gov.bc.ca/EmploymentStandards

We also recommend that parents and youth visit the Young Worker section of the WorkSafeBC website (www.worksafebc.com).

Sample Parent or Guardian Written Consent

A sample letter of consent for employment of a young person can be found [here](#). (or on our website at www.gov.bc.ca/EmploymentStandards). This letter must be signed by a parent or guardian and a copy kept by the employer of your child. You can customize it to most accurately reflect the employment.
