



**Safety at work
is everyone's job.**

It's the law!

Employing young workers

Young workers—and new workers of any age—are often keen to learn and can bring new ideas and renewed energy to your workplace, however...

Keep in mind that...

- ... young workers often can't recognize health and safety hazards and hesitate to ask questions
- ... new and young workers are much more likely to be injured on the job.¹

Employers' obligations under Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSa) include the duty to:

- Ensure that equipment, materials and protective devices are provided, maintained in good condition, and always used as required by law.
- Ensure that workplace health and safety policies, programs, measures and procedures are current and always followed.
- Provide ongoing information, instruction and supervision to protect workers.
- Make sure your supervisors are competent when you appoint them.
- Know the hazards in your workplace and make sure that workers and their supervisors are aware of them.
- Assist, respond to, and cooperate with health and safety committees or representatives as required by law.
- Comply with sector-specific minimum age requirements for workers in Ontario.
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect all workers, including new and young workers.



Call toll-free 24/7

Call **1-877-202-0008** anytime to report workplace incidents, critical injuries or fatalities, or for general inquiries about health and safety at the workplace.

¹ Although they work 10 per cent of the hours of all workers, workers under age 25 injure themselves at a rate of 16 per cent — Institut de Recherche Robert-Sauvé en Santé et en Sécurité du Travail, 2008, as referenced by Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/resources/truthHurts.html>.

It's the law.

Section 25 of Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act describes some of your duties as an employer.

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm#BK21

*By keeping young workers safe, you help to keep **all workers safe!***

Many young workers report that they have not received **any** training before taking on a new task!

Inform, instruct and supervise workers to protect their health and safety.

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Be a leader in workplace health and safety! Encourage these best practices:

- Include health and safety in your company's strategic plan.
- Show your commitment to health and safety with your own consistent, safe work practices — and emphasize that unsafe work practices are unacceptable.
- Reinforce your company's health and safety priorities in all workplace communications.
- Attend workplace health and safety training sessions.
- Encourage all workers, especially new and young workers, to alert their supervisors immediately if they see something that endangers their safety.
- Introduce new workers to the Health and Safety Manager, Joint Health and Safety Committee members or Health and Safety Representative.
- Arrange for experienced, safety-conscious workers to coach new workers.
- Encourage supervisors to periodically take young workers on health and safety inspections to check for hazards and unsafe work practices.
- Encourage young workers to come forward with ideas and suggestions.

Age matters! Minimum age for working in Ontario

The minimum age for working in Ontario is 14 years in most types of industrial workplaces.

Regulations specify higher minimum ages for certain types of work and workplaces:

15 yrs	most factories, including restaurant kitchens, automotive service garages, produce and meat preparation areas, laundries, warehouses, and shipping and receiving areas in grocery stores
16 yrs	construction projects, mining plants, surface mines (except workforce), logging operations
18 yrs	underground mine, surface mine workforce, window cleaning.

Workers aged 14, 15, 16 or 17 **may not be employed during school hours** unless they are excused from school attendance in accordance with the Education Act.

Bottom line

Employers, you play a vital role in facilitating the safety of everyone in your workplace. Be a role model for new and young workers starting out. Be a leader in workplace health and safety.

Workplace inspections

Ministry of Labour inspectors regularly check to see that workers are of legal age and that their working conditions comply with workplace health and safety requirements. For more information visit the Ministry of Labour website at <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca>.

www.ontario.ca/YoungWorkers

Note: This document does not constitute legal advice and has no legal effect. To determine your rights and obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations, please contact your legal counsel or refer to the legislation at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm.

While this document may be available to Ministry of Labour inspectors, they will apply and enforce the Act and its regulations based on the facts as they may find them in the workplace. This document does not affect their enforcement discretion in any way.

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Ontario Ministry of Labour

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