



Toolbox Talks for Club Employees: Youth Workers

Information from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) shows that in 2005, 54 youth under the age of 18 died from work-related injuries. In 2003, an estimated 54,800 work-related injuries and illnesses among youth less than 18 years of age were treated in hospital emergency departments. Only one-third of work-related injuries are seen in emergency departments, resulting in approximately 160,000 youth sustaining work-related injuries and illnesses each year.

Further data from NIOSH demonstrates that the majority of injuries sustained by youth workers employed in food & beverage occupations were cuts, followed by burns (hot grease) and slipping on wet or greasy floors. Another concern employers should guard against is exposure to hazardous chemicals – especially chlorine and ammonia.

The Fair Labor Standards Act, enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, has special rules that regulate the hours and jobs that youth workers are allowed to perform. OSHA is the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Its role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. OSHA laws are designed to protect all employees, including youth workers, from injury.

Employers of youth workers must abide by the following regulations:

Youth Workers Ages 16 and 17-years-old are prohibited from performing the following hazardous duties:

- Sixteen-year-olds may not operate motor vehicles (cars, pickup trucks, golf carts). Seventeen-year-olds may, on a very limited basis, during daylight hours, drive a motor vehicle. The youth must have a valid state driver's license, have completed a state-approved driver education course, have no record of moving violations, and their vehicle must be equipped with a seat belt.
- Cannot operate chain saws.
- Cannot operate most power-driven hoisting apparatus such as forklifts.
- Cannot operate or clean power-driven meat processing machines, such as meat slicers. The prohibition against cleaning these machines does not apply to the cleaning of the individual parts, including the blades, if the machine is dismantled and reassembled by an adult.
- Cannot operate or clean power-driven bakery machines such as vertical dough and batter mixers, dough rollers and dough sheeters. The prohibition concerning cleaning such machines does not apply to the cleaning of the individual parts of such machines, as long as such machines are dismantled or reassembled by an adult.
- Cannot operate power-driven paper products machines such as scrap paper balers and paper box compactors. Sixteen- and 17-year-olds may load, but not operate or unload, certain scrap balers and paper box compactors under very specific guidelines.

Youth Workers Ages 14 and 15-years-old are prohibited from performing the following duties:

- Cannot bake.
- Cannot cook, except cooking is permitted with electric or gas grilles which does not involve cooking over an open flame. Cooking is also permitted with deep fryers that are equipped with and utilize a device which automatically lowers the baskets into and from the hot oil or grease.
- Minors are permitted to clean kitchen equipment, that they are otherwise not prohibited from operating; remove oil or grease filters; pour oil or grease through filters; and move receptacles containing hot grease or hot oil; but only when the equipment, surfaces, containers, and liquids do not exceed a temperature of 100° F.
- Cannot operate power-driven food slicers and grinders, food choppers, and cutters, and bakery-type mixers.
- Cannot load or unload vehicles.
- Cannot work in a meat cooler or freezer.
- Cannot operate a garbage disposal.
- Cannot operate a golf cart.
- Cannot operate a power mower.
- Cannot operate a power ball washer.
- Cannot tend power-driven machinery which includes setting up, adjusting, cleaning, fueling, oiling, maintaining, inspecting, transporting, and repairing such equipment.
- Youth under 16 years of age may not be employed as lifeguards at natural environment facilities such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, or oceanside beaches. Fifteen-year-olds, but not youth less than 15 years of age, may be employed as lifeguards at traditional swimming pools under certain conditions.

Safety is an important part of your job. You should work with your supervisors and fellow employees to help ensure that you have a safe workplace.

Follow these helpful reminders to keep you and your fellow employees safe at the club.

1. **Make Safety a Priority.** Make safety an important part of your job and help set a good example for other employees. Do not be influenced by others around you who are negative.
2. **Use Your Own Initiative for Safety Protection.** If you are uncertain, ask. Do not accept answers that contain, "I think, I assume, I guess." Be sure.
3. **Wear Proper and Sensible Work Clothes.** Wear sturdy and appropriate footwear. These should enclose the foot fully. Avoid loose clothing, dangling jewelry and be sure that long hair is tied back and cannot become entangled in the equipment with which you are working.
4. **Practice Good Personal Cleanliness.** Avoid touching your eyes, face, and mouth with dirty gloves or hands. Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap.
5. **Be a Positive Part of the Safety Team.** Willingly accept and follow safety rules. Encourage others to do so. Your attitude can play a major role in the prevention of accidents and injuries.

Through OSHA's Alliance Program this Toolbox Talk was developed as a product of the OSHA and CMAA Alliance for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor.