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If you have questions about this update or any other update, please contact us at [ecompliance@laborlawcenter.com](mailto:ecompliance@laborlawcenter.com) or call 1-800-745-9970.

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# WASHINGTON SUMMARY OF WORKPLACE RIGHTS



Washington State Department of  
Labor & Industries

## Your Rights as a Worker

### It's the law!

Employers must post this notice where employees can read it.

### Wage and Overtime Laws

#### Workers must be paid the Washington minimum wage

- Most workers who are 16 years of age or older must be paid at least the minimum wage for all hours worked. See [www.Lni.wa.gov/MinWage](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/MinWage).
- Workers who are 14 or 15 may be paid 85% of the minimum wage.
- Tips cannot be counted as part of the minimum wage. Employers must pay all tips to employees.

#### Overtime pay is due when working more than 40 hours

Most workers must be paid one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 in a fixed seven-day workweek.

### Workers Need Meal and Rest Breaks

#### Meal period

Most workers are entitled to a 30-minute unpaid meal period if working more than five hours in a day. If you must remain on duty during your meal period, you must be paid for the 30 minutes. Agricultural workers are entitled to a second 30-minute unpaid meal period if they work more than 11 hours in a day. Learn more at [www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/workplace-policies/rest-breaks-meal-periods-and-schedules](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/workplace-policies/rest-breaks-meal-periods-and-schedules).

#### Breaks

- Most workers are entitled to a 10-minute paid rest break for each four hours worked and must not work more than three hours without a break.
- Agricultural workers must have a 10-minute paid rest break within each four-hour period of work.
- If you are under 18, see "Teen Corner" at right.

### Pay Requirements

#### Regular Payday

Workers must be paid at least once a month on a regularly scheduled payday. Your employer must give you a pay statement showing the number of hours worked, rate of pay, number of piece work units (if piece work), gross pay, the pay period and all deductions taken.

### Leave Laws

#### Paid sick leave

Most workers earn a minimum of one hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked. This leave may be used beginning on the 90th calendar day of employment. Employers must provide employees with a statement that includes their accrued, used and available hours of this leave at least once per month. This information may be provided on your regular pay statement or as a separate notification. Workers must be allowed to carry over a minimum of 40 hours of any unused paid sick leave to the following year. For details on authorized use, accrual details, and eligibility, see [www.Lni.wa.gov/SickLeave](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/SickLeave).

#### Washington Family Care Act: Use of paid leave to care for sick family

Employees are entitled to use their choice of any employer provided paid leave (sick, vacation, certain short-term disability plans, or other paid time off) to care for:

- A child with a health condition requiring treatment or supervision;
  - A spouse, parent, parent-in-law, or grandparent with a serious health condition or an emergency health condition; and
  - Children 18 years and older with disabilities that make them incapable of self-care.
- For more information, see [www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/leave/family-care-act](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/leave/family-care-act).

#### Leave for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking

Victims and their family members are allowed to take reasonable leave from work for legal or law enforcement assistance, medical treatment, counseling, relocation, meetings with their crime victim advocate, or to protect their safety. Employers are also required to provide reasonable safety accommodations to victims. For more information, see [www.Lni.wa.gov/DVLeave](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/DVLeave).

#### Leave for military spouses during deployment

Spouses or registered domestic partners of military personnel who receive notice to deploy or who are on leave from deployment during times of military conflict may take a total of 15 days unpaid leave per deployment.

**Your employer may not fire or retaliate against you for exercising**





For more information regarding authorized deductions, go to [www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/getting-paid](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/getting-paid) and click on "Paycheck deductions."

### Equal Pay and Opportunities Act

Under this law, your employer is prohibited from providing unequal pay or career advancement opportunities based on gender. You also have the right to disclose, compare, or discuss your wages or the wages of other employees. Your employer cannot take any adverse action against you for discussing wages, filing a complaint, or exercising other protected rights under the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act. Employers also are prohibited from requesting a job applicant's wage or salary history, except under certain circumstances, and cannot require an applicant's wage or salary history meet certain criteria. Job applicants also have the right to certain salary information if the employer has 15 or more employees. For more information or to file a complaint, go to [www.Lni.wa.gov/EqualPay](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/EqualPay).

### Teen Corner — Information for Workers Ages 14–17

- The minimum age for work is generally 14, with different rules for ages 14–15 and ages 16–17.
- Employers must have a minor work permit to employ teens. This requirement applies to family members except on family farms. Teens do not need a work permit.
- Teens are required to have authorization forms signed before they begin working. For summer employment, parents must sign the Parent Authorization for Summer Work form. If you work during the school year, a parent and a school official must sign the Parent/School Authorization form.
- Many jobs are not allowed for anyone under 18 because they are not safe.
- Work hours are limited for teens, with more restrictions on work hours during school weeks.

#### Meal and rest breaks for teens

- In agricultural work, teens of any age get a meal period of 30 minutes if working more than five hours, and a 10-minute paid break for each four hours worked.
- In all other industries, teens who are 16 or 17 must have a 30-minute meal period if working more than five hours, and a 10-minute paid break for each four hours worked. They must have the rest break at least every three hours.
- Teens who are 14 or 15 must have a 30-minute meal period no later than the end of the fourth hour, and a 10-minute paid break for every two hours worked.

To find out more about teens in the workplace: [www.Lni.wa.gov/TeenWorkers](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/TeenWorkers), 1-866-219-7321, [TeenSafety@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:TeenSafety@Lni.wa.gov).

**your rights or filing a complaint related to minimum wage, overtime, paid sick leave or protected leave.**

#### Administered by other agencies

**Paid Family and Medical Leave:** Administered by Washington Employment Security Department. Washington offers paid family and medical leave benefits to workers. This insurance program is funded by premiums paid by both employees and many employers. Workers are allowed to take up to 12 weeks, as needed, when they welcome a new child into their family, are struck by a serious illness or injury, need to take care of an ill or ailing relative, and for certain military connected events. As directed by the Legislature, premium assessment started on Jan. 1, 2019. For more information, see [www.paidleave.wa.gov](http://www.paidleave.wa.gov).

**Pregnancy disability leave:** Enforced by the Washington State Human Rights Commission under the Washington State Law Against Discrimination (WLAD). [www.hum.wa.gov](http://www.hum.wa.gov) or 1-800-233-3247

**Family and Medical Leave Act:** Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor. Eligible employees can enforce their right to protected family and medical leave under the FMLA by contacting the Department of Labor at [www.dol.gov/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla) or 1-866-487-9243.

### Contact L&I

#### Need more information? Questions about filing a worker rights complaint?

Online: [www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/workers-rights)  
Call: 1-866-219-7321, toll-free  
Visit: [www.Lni.wa.gov/Offices](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Offices)  
Email: [ESgeneral@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:ESgeneral@Lni.wa.gov)

#### About required workplace posters

Go to [www.Lni.wa.gov/RequiredPosters](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/RequiredPosters) to learn more about workplace posters from L&I and other government agencies.

### Human trafficking is against the law

For victim assistance, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888, or the Washington State Office of Crime Victims Advocacy at 1-800-822-1067.

*Upon request, foreign language support and formats for persons with disabilities are available. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 711. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.*

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