

How can I prevent injuries in the first place?

- Report unsafe conditions to your boss and to your union representative (if you're a union member).
- If you need assistance talking to your boss, ask for help from a responsible adult such as a co-worker, parent, or teacher.
- If your employer does not fix a safety problem, call OSHA at 617-565-9860. OSHA is the agency that enforces federal health and safety laws.
- Participate in training programs or request training if none is offered.
- Comply with workplace safety rules and instructions.



How can I get more information about workers compensation?

Contact the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents, the state agency that runs the workers' compensation system (617-727-4900, toll-free at 800-323-3249, ext. 470, or on the Web at www.state.ma.us/dia).

The information in this factsheet applies to most situations. Some rules and exceptions not covered here may apply to you and affect your situation. To learn more, contact the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents.

Important Resources

Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents
800-323-3249 ext. 470 • www.state.ma.us/dia

Massachusetts Department of Public Health,
Teens at Work Project 617-624-5632

www.state.ma.us/dph/ohsp

Massachusetts Attorney
General's Office, Fair Labor
and Business Practices
Division

617-727-3465
www.ago.state.ma.us

U.S. Department of Labor,
Wage and Hour Division
617-565-2066
www.dol.gov/dol/esa

U.S. Department of Labor,
OSHA
617-565-9860 • www.osha.gov

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Under 18 and hurt on the job?

Information on Workers' Compensation

You are entitled

to workers' compensation benefits if you are injured on the job or develop an illness because of your job:

- Regardless of your age or the number of hours you work per week;
- No matter what method your employer uses to pay you;
- Even if you are a citizen of another country;
- No matter who or what caused your work-related injury or illness.





What do workers' compensation benefits cover?

- **Medical bills** (whether or not you lose time at work).
- **Lost wages** if you miss 5 or more workdays because of a work-related injury or illness.
- **Other benefits** if you become permanently disabled.

What should I do if I'm injured on the job or develop a work-related illness?

- Tell your boss right away no matter what the injury is or how serious you think it is.
- Tell your parent or guardian.
- If necessary, get medical treatment immediately, even if you have to leave work to do so.
- Make sure your employer files a claim with its workers' compensation insurer or you can file a claim with the insurer yourself. Ask your employer for a claim form or get one directly from the insurer.
- Know your rights and get the workers' compensation benefits you deserve.

Each year in the U.S., 70 workers under age 18 die from injuries on the job and another 70,000 are hurt badly enough to seek emergency medical treatment. These injuries occur even though child labor laws prohibit employers from assigning workers under 18 to operate hazardous equipment or do dangerous jobs.

What are my rights?

You have a right to:

- **Get medical treatment** and to have it paid for by your employer's workers' compensation insurer. (Your employer cannot tell you to use your own or your parents' health insurance to pay for medical bills for work-related injuries).
- **Be paid a portion of your wages** if you miss 5 or more days of work because of a work-related injury or illness. (The amount is usually based on your average weekly salary but you may be entitled to additional compensation if your injury has long-lasting effects on your future earning abilities).
- **Know the name of your employer's workers' compensation insurer** and the policy number. (State law requires employers to post this information in the workplace).
- **Choose your own doctor**, however if the workers' compensation insurer or the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents wants you to be examined by a doctor of their choosing, you must see that doctor also.
- **Return to work.** Your employer cannot fire you for getting hurt at work or for missing work because of a work-related injury or illness.
- **Claim for double compensation** if you were injured while employed in conditions that violate child labor laws.
- **Speak up** about workplace health and safety concerns.
- **File a claim** even if your employer has no workers' compensation insurance. Call the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents to get more information.

Do I need a lawyer?

You do not need a lawyer to file a workers' compensation claim. If your employer's workers' compensation insurer denies or contests your claim, you and/or your parent or guardian should consult with a lawyer who has experience handling workers' compensation cases.