

## **Working while at School**

### **How old can I be to start work?**

In Queensland, there are laws that regulate how old you can be to commence work and the number of hours you can work while you are at school. The basics of these laws are outlined below.

### **Parental Consent**

An employer can employ a school-aged or young child (a young person) to perform work in Queensland with the parent's consent. An employer cannot also require a young person to work while they should be in attendance at school.

If a young person does not have a parent or if they are living independently from their parent(s), the person can apply for a special circumstances certificate to permit them to work when they are not required to attend at school.

### **Contacting parents**

If a young person is injured or becomes ill while at work to the extent they can no longer work, the employer must take all reasonable steps to contact the child's parent.

The employer is also obliged to take reasonable measures to ensure the child is able to contact a parent while at work and allow the child to do so in reasonable circumstances.

### **Minimum age**

Generally, an employer must not require or permit a child under 13 years to do any work, with the exception of volunteer work or work in the entertainment industry.

A child who is at least 11 years old, may do supervised delivery work of newspapers, advertising material or other similar things.

### **Prohibited hours**

An employer must not require or permit a school-aged child to perform work during school hours when the child is required to attend school.

Prohibited hours also include hours between 10 pm and 6 am for school aged and young children, or between 6 pm and 6 am for children aged 11 or 12 years performing delivery work.

### **Maximum hours of work**

There are maximum allowable hours for school aged and young children –

	<b>On a school day</b>	<b>On a non-school day</b>	<b>During as school week</b>	<b>During a non-school week</b>
<b>School aged child</b>	4	8	12	38
<b>Young child</b>	N/A	4	N/A	12

### **Shifts and Breaks**

Unless specified in an award or agreement, a school-aged or young child must:

- Not work more than one shift on a single day
- Be given at least a one hour break after the end of the fourth hour

### **Supervision**

An employer must ensure that a child is appropriately supervised by an adult and must have an adult near to, and in regular contact, with the child when performing:

- Delivery work
- Work that involves the exchange of money

### **Conditions applying to all employees aged under 18 years**

There are a number of conditions of employment for any young person required to work including whether the work is paid, unpaid, voluntary or within a family business. These conditions include a prohibition on requiring or permitting children to work while nude or dressed in a sexually provocative manner, as a social escort, or in inappropriate roles or situations.

### **Further Information**

You can find further detailed information on employment of school-aged children and young people in the Office of Industrial Relations 'Child Employment Guide' [here](#).