
**Labor & Workplace Standards
Committee**

HB 1121

Brief Description: Concerning restrictions on the working conditions and hours of sixteen- and seventeen-year olds.

Sponsors: Representatives McClintock, Schmidt, Jacobsen and Orcutt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Labor and Industries to allow a 16- or 17-year old to work the same number and frequency of hours during the school year as would be permitted during school vacations or holidays ("nonschool week hours") if the minor is enrolled in a career and technical education program and the work is performed for an employer approved by the program.

Hearing Date: 2/4/25

Staff: Kelly Leonard (786-7147).

Background:

Both federal and state laws impose restrictions on the employment of minors (persons under 18 years of age). The Washington Industrial Welfare Act directs the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) to establish requirements and restrictions on the wages, working hours, and other conditions for the employment of minors in nonagricultural trades and occupations. In order to employ a minor, an employer must: (1) obtain a minor work permit; (2) obtain parental and school authorization, if applicable; (3) verify the minor's age and comply with any restrictions imposed based on age; and (4) limit the hours worked by the minor, if applicable.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The restrictions on the working hours for minors participating in nonagricultural work varies based on the age group and whether school is in session. The work week for minors is Sunday through Saturday, and the school week is Monday through Friday. Any week with any amount of school time is considered a school week. Minors cannot work during school hours. "School hours" are defined as the hours that the minor's applicable neighborhood public school is in session, which apply even in instances where the minor is not enrolled in school.

There are some exceptions to the hours restrictions. A 16- or 17-year old may work the same hours during a school week as would be permitted during a nonschool week if the minor: (1) is married; (2) is a parent; or (3) has a high school diploma or equivalent. In addition, L&I rules permit a minor enrolled in a bona fide college program, like a running start program, to work nonschool week hours during school weeks. In other instances without an explicit exception, an employer may seek a variance from L&I to allow a minor to work additional hours during school weeks.

For 16- and 17-year olds, L&I rules limit working hours for nonagricultural work as follows:

Schedule	Maximum Hours Per Day	Maximum Hours Per Week	Maximum Days Per Week	Start to End Times
School Week	4 hours (except for 8 hours on weekends)	20 hours	6 days	7 a.m. - 10 p.m. (midnight on Fridays and Saturdays)
Nonschool Week (Vacations)	8 hours	48 hours	6 days	5 a.m. - Midnight
School Week with special variance	6 hours	28 hours	6 days	7 a.m. - 10 p.m. (midnight on Fridays and Saturdays)

Summary of Bill:

L&I rules must allow a 16- or 17-year old minor to work the same number and frequency of hours during the school year as would be permitted during school vacations or holidays (nonschool week hours) if the minor is enrolled in a career and technical education program and the work is performed for an employer approved by the program. A "career and technical education program" refers to a work-based learning program approved by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction or the minor's school district, including, for example, Core Plus programs.

The same allowance of hours must be made for a 16- or 17-year old enrolled in a bona fide college program, except the minor is not required to work for an approved employer, effectively codifying the L&I rule with respect to these minors.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.