

Summer Help

Summer will soon be here and many of you may be considering taking on some children or young people as paid summer help. This arrangement can be great for everyone, but there are some things you should consider first.

Here are some helpful tips for hiring summer help:

The Laws

(This list is not all inclusive – for more detail, visit www.youthrules.dol.gov)

- **WAGES:** A special minimum wage of \$4.25 per hour applies to employees under the age of 20 during their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment with an employer. After 90 days, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires employers to pay the full federal minimum wage.
- **HOURS:** Those under the age of 16 have Department of Labor (DOL) restrictions on the hours of the day and number of hours they can work. Visit www.youthrules.dol.gov to learn more.
- **BREAKS:** Workers aged 14-15 must be given a half-hour break every 5 hours. If they are 16 or older and working 7½ hours or more per day, they should have a 20 minute break during the fifth hour of work.
- Children aged 12-13 yrs. may hand-harvest berries, bulbs, cucumbers and spinach during non-school weeks either with a parent or consent from a parent/guardian.
- Under-16s may not work on a ladder or other elevated structure more than 20 feet off the ground.
- Youths under 16 who work on their parent/guardian's farm may not operate a tractor with more than 20-horsepower takeoff (PTO) horsepower, or connect or disconnect farm implements from a tractor without attending a class and being officially certified.

Preparing Your Help

- Is the area they are working in safe and is all equipment in good working order?
- Have you evaluated their ability to do the task? Visit www.nagcat.org for a set of questions to help determine this.
- Have they been taught how to operate the equipment and is it age appropriate?
- Are they aware of the potential dangers and have you discussed what to do in an emergency?
- Are they aware of any DOL or IDOT laws that are part of the task they are given (i.e. SMV emblems and transportation on public roadways)?
- Do you have a well stocked first aid kit and fire extinguisher handy and do they know how to use them?
- Do they have the proper personal protective equipment for the task? (Steel-toed boots, goggles, earplugs, etc.)
- Make sure all safety warning stickers are in place and easily readable.

Summer Help

North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) is a great resource to evaluate the abilities of your employees and identify safety measures for many common farm tasks. Visit www.nagcat.org to find out more.

This message is brought to you by the Center for Rural Health and Farm Safety at Carle Foundation Hospital. For more information, please visit us at carle.org/farmsafety, email farmsafety@carle.com or call (217) 902-5204.