

# Young workers your wages your rights



**U<27**  
UNISON YOUNG MEMBERS

**UNISON**  
*the public service union*



## If you want to get a fair deal at work, it's important to know your rights

Some rights apply to everyone in the workforce. Whatever your age, you are entitled to:

- an itemised pay slip from the first pay day
- a written statement of terms and conditions (a contract of employment) within two months of starting work
- 28 days paid annual leave (however you do not have a statutory right to paid leave on bank and public holidays, and if your employer gives paid leave on a bank or public holiday, this can count towards your minimum holiday entitlement.)
- a maximum average working week of 48 hours
- unpaid time off for family emergencies.

Along with all workers you have the right to be:

- free from discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, age, religion, disability, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or because you work part-time
- protected against dismissal for claiming your rights.

If you are working as a temporary or agency worker, you have the right to the same pay and conditions as every other worker (except for sick pay and pension rights) once you have been in the job for 12 weeks.

If you have one year of continuous service with your employer, you have the right to claim unfair dismissal at an employment tribunal.

And you have the right to join a trade union and take part in union activities.

## Wages

From 1 October 2011 you are entitled to a minimum wage of:

Age	Hourly rate
16-17	£3.68
18-20	£4.98
21 or over	£6.08

Apprentice rate £2.60 – for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

It is against the law for your employer to dismiss or disadvantage you because you are about to qualify for the minimum wage, or for the higher rate of minimum wage.

UNISON is campaigning for all workers who do a full job to receive the adult rate of minimum wage – regardless of age.

## Some rights apply specially to young workers

If you are under 18 you should not work more than eight hours a day, or more than 40 hours a week.

You are entitled to:

- a minimum break of 12 hours in every 24-hour period
- daily rest breaks of at least 30 minutes after 4½ hours work
- two consecutive days off in every seven-day period that you work.

You cannot work between 10pm and 6am (but you can agree to change this to between 11pm and 7am, although there are some exceptions to this: hospitals, agriculture, retail, hotels or catering, post or newspaper delivery, cultural, sporting, artistic or advertising activities).

Your employer should provide proper training and supervision so that you can work safely and you should be given safety clothing and equipment, such as boots, gloves or safety glasses if necessary for your work.





You cannot operate certain types of machinery such as slicing, welding and cutting machinery or drive forklift trucks.

In addition, your employer should not make you do work

- which is beyond your capability
- exposes you to toxic substances or radiation
- involves health risks from extreme temperature, noise or vibration.

## Money in, money out

Your employer will deduct tax from your pay if you earn more than £144 a week and will deduct National Insurance from your pay if you earn more than £102 a week. Any other deductions (till shortages, breakages, etc.) can only be made if you have agreed beforehand and they are written into your contract of employment.

All deductions should be itemised on your pay slip.

You may be able to get Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), if you have:

- been sick for at least four or more days in a row (including weekends, bank holidays and days that you do not normally work)
- average weekly earnings equal to or more than the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL), currently £102 per week.

For more information on young workers:

**[www.unison.org.uk/young](http://www.unison.org.uk/young)**

For more information on your rights:

**[www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/young\\_workers](http://www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/young_workers)**

To join UNISON visit:

**[www.unison.org.uk/join](http://www.unison.org.uk/join)**