

# Young workers in the tourism sector: risks and opportunities

Example of a template for  
Safety brochure for young workers



# TIPS FOR TEENS

5 WAYS TO STAY SAFE AT WORK

## 5 WAYS TO STAY SAFE AT WORK

1. Look for hazards
2. Know your rights
3. Get safety training
4. Follow safety rules
5. Ask questions / get help

Are you a worker under 18 years of age? You may be legally old enough to work, but did you know that if the work or working conditions are dangerous, you could be considered child labour?

As a young worker, you have a right to special protection. ILO Conventions and the laws in most countries require employers to provide a safe workplace and work that is safe for you. Not all employers know about or follow these laws, and the laws are not always enforced. But it is important for you to know what your employer should provide. These five steps will help you stay safe.

### TRUE STORIES

When Fatima was 14, she got both arms caught in an ice-crushing machine. Now she is permanently disabled and will never have full use of her arms.

When Juan was 16, he was attacked and robbed at gunpoint at a food stall. He was working alone at midnight.

16 year old Rahul had a job making bricks. He was not told to use a mask, and after breathing the dust for several months, he now has a hard time breathing and gets sick a lot.

Anna is a 17 year old who works on a farm 40 hours a week. Her boss is always yelling at her to work faster. When she told him she was working as hard as she could, he fired her.

## 1. Look for hazards in your workplace

Be aware of the dangers on your job. Some of them may be obvious and can hurt you right away. Others may be “hidden” and might not make you sick until later.

Think about some of the ways you might get hurt or become sick in your particular job.



Using knives, box cutters, or slicers can cause serious cuts



Working in high places can lead to falls



Lifting heavy objects can hurt your back



Working alone, especially at night, puts you at risk of harassment or attack

These are just examples. Every job has its own health and safety hazards. Learn to look for them, but remember, it's your employer's responsibility to make sure your workplace is safe.



## 2. Know your rights

There are international guidelines and national laws that protect young workers. These say that your workplace must be safe. Youth are NOT allowed to do work which is physically or psychologically dangerous. Laws also limit the hours and times of day that you can work in order that you have time for school and adequate rest. Your employer must follow these rules

### In principle<sup>1</sup>, you should not do work such as:

- Work underground, such as in a mine, or under water
- Work at dangerous heights, such as on roofs, ladders or scaffolds
- Work in confined spaces, such as silos or storage tanks
- Use powered machinery, equipment, or tools such as saws or tractors
- Work near or with hazardous chemicals, loud noises, or vibrations
- Work in extreme heat or cold
- Work alone, long hours or late at night

### ***According to the laws in your country, your employer must:***

*(insert relevant national legislation on each of the following issues)*

- *Providing a safe and healthful workplace*
- *Providing training, including information about chemicals*
- *Providing protective equipment if needed (safety glasses, gloves, etc.)*
- *Pay for medical care if you get hurt or sick because of your job*
- *Pay at least the minimum wage*
- *Prohibit harassment, bullying, and discrimination*
- *Allow youth to join or organize a union in the workplace*

<sup>1</sup>Exceptions may be made for youth over 16 who are in training and are being closely supervised.

### 3. Get safety training

You should know how to do your job safely. Your boss should train you to do every task that's part of your job so you can do it without getting injured. For example, you should be shown how to:

- Handle properly any chemicals that are required for your job
- Lift heavy things in the right way
- Use knives, machetes, and other cutting tools safely
- Operate and clean tools and machines in a safe manner
- Wear safety glasses, gloves, and earplugs when needed
- Climb ladders safely
- Handle bullying or abuse by someone at work
- Respond to violent situations and robberies in a safe manner
- Know what to do when there is a fire or someone gets hurt

Keep yourself from getting hurt. Ask for more training! Always ask questions if you are not sure how to do something. If you do not get the training you need from your boss or supervisor, ask someone else. Ask a co-worker, union representative, teacher, or trainer.

***“I think I understand how to do this, but can you watch to make sure I’m doing everything right?”***

***“I’m still not sure how to do this. Can you show me once more?”***



### 4. Follow safety rules

Once you have been trained, you need to keep your eyes open, follow all the safety rules, and report problems you see.

- Do every task safely, the way you have been trained
- Keep work areas clean and free from clutter
- Don't work after drinking alcohol or using drugs or when very tired
- Report any health and safety hazards to your boss

#### What if you get hurt on the job?

- ✓ In an emergency, call (*insert emergency number*)
- ✓ Tell your boss right away.
- ✓ Tell your parent or another family member.
- ✓ If necessary, go to a clinic or doctor right away.
- ✓ If your government has an accident registry, fill out an injury form



### 5. Ask questions and get help

If you think you might get hurt, ask for help. A good supervisor likes it when workers ask questions in a respectful way. Co-workers also may be able to help you.

*“I keep having headaches. Maybe it is because of these chemicals. I’ll ask a pharmacist about it.”*

*“These boxes are heavy and I don’t want to hurt my back. It would be safer and quicker if someone helps me lift them. I think my boss will approve if I show her that, not only will it protect me, but it will be faster which saves her money.”*

*“According to what I learned at school, I think I’m being asked to do tasks I am too young for. But I am afraid the manager will think I am lazy. I will ask one of the other workers for advice. “*

#### What if you need more help?

If your boss does not help, or if you are afraid you will get fired or punished if you speak up you can:

- ✓ talk to one of the adult workers
- ✓ talk to a union representative
- ✓ talk to your parents, a teacher, or a community worker
- ✓ call or write to one of the agencies in charge of worker protection

## CHECKLIST

- Do you use knives, machetes, or other cutting tools?
- Do you work in a very hot (or cold) place or with hot materials?
- Do you climb up trees, ladders or scaffolding?
- Do you lift heavy objects?
- Do you clean or work with machines or power tools?
- Do you breathe fumes from paints, cleaners, gasoline, or pesticides?
- Do you use computer keyboards for long periods?
- Do you work around loud machines?
- Do you pick crops for long periods?
- Do you work at a high rate of speed or do the same movement over and over?
- Do you ever get abuse or improper suggestions from customers or management?
- Do you usually work alone for long periods or at night?

## WARNING SIGNS

Pay attention to signs that your workplace may be unsafe. There may be a problem if:

- Workers are getting hurt or sick
- There is no regular training programme
- Equipment is broken or electric cords are frayed
- Machines do not have safety guards
- Chemicals are stored in containers with no labels
- There is no posted policy against sexual harassment
- Workers are allowed to use shortcuts to save time
- Workplace is messy and the washrooms and toilets are dirty
- Floors are slippery
- The manager shouts at the workers

## Stay Safe

For more information contact:

# Working **Y**outh

Do you do cleaning work in hotels?

You may be setting tables, serving customers, chopping food, cooking, washing dishes or cleaning up. This can be good and decent work, but there are always things that can hurt you or make you sick. Your employer is responsible for providing a safe workplace, but it is wise for you to know the dangers and what to do about them.

## The top 3 dangers for youth



- Danger of sexual advances or improper requests from hotel guests



- Lifting things which are too heavy for you



- Using harsh cleaning agents without knowing the safety concerns

# HOTEL CLEANING

## What YOU should do to stay safe on the job

### Know the law

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The rule is: No one under 18 should do hazardous work!  
(*Insert country name*) has a law to protect young workers.  
The law says:

*(insert key points from the law that address: age, hours, tasks that are off limits)*

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### Get trained

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**Your boss or supervisor must train you** to do every task that's part of your job, such as how to handle any chemicals you need to use, how to lift heavy things, or how to use cutting tools or equipment safely, and show you what might be harmful. Your boss should also teach you what to do if there is a robbery, crime, or abuse from a customer. Do not be shy if you are not sure how to do something—ask!

### Be careful; be proud

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You have a job. You are helping your family. You deserve respect from clients and co-workers. If something seems unsafe, ask about it. If someone bothers or threatens you, ask for help. Keep your eyes open for dangers.

Remember, it is your employer's responsibility to provide a safe workplace. It is **your** responsibility to follow instructions and safety rules carefully.

## What YOUR EMPLOYER should do so you are safe

- Have the vacuum cleaner, iron, and other materials in good repair
- Have a rule against violence and harassment of any kind and enforce it
- Give you any rubber gloves and any other protective gear you need
- Have a first aid kit and an emergency plan in case you are hurt

### TRUE STORIES

*"It was my second week on the job. I slipped on the wet floor and fell right on my tailbone. I couldn't walk for two weeks, and couldn't play soccer the rest of the season."*

*"I was chopping up vegetables. Nobody showed me how to do it quickly without getting hurt, and the boss kept shouting at me. I cut my finger badly and couldn't work for three days."*

*"The customers are always yelling at me. One time a customer pushed me so hard I fell down. It makes me scared, and I go home with headaches every day."*

# Some other dangers and what to do about them

## STRAIN

- Get help when lifting heavy items, such as turning the mattress or tucking sheets under
- Remember "SLIM" (Safe Lifting Methods)

**S**quat to pick up the object and lift using your leg muscles not your back

**L**ean close, keeping the heavy item against your body

**M**ove your feet to turn, do not twist your body

- Use a cart to move linen, laundry, or other heavy items. Push rather than pull carts
- Take regular rest breaks, even just short breaks to stretch your body; take turns with other workers to do different types of tasks
- Pad your knees (with a mat or towel) and change your position often when you work on your knees
- Clean up spills immediately
- Do not carry items too tall for you to see over.

## FALLS

- Use a ladder or footstool to reach areas up high. Never stand on the edge of a bathtub, bed or chair.

## CHEMICALS

Cleaning products for toilets and floors are often harsh and can hurt you. To protect yourself,

- Read the labels on the cleaning products you use. Make sure you understand if

any are dangerous and what you should do if you get them on your skin or in your eyes. If unsure, or not labeled, ask! If the chemical is hazardous, wear gloves (provided by your employer). Do not mix chemicals together.

## STRESS

- If someone shouts at or threatens you, call a co-worker or supervisor
- If someone tries to sexually harass you, tell your boss, and get help from a trusted friend or community organization outside the workplace
- Do not work alone in a hotel room if hotel guests are present.

## DISEASE

You can get colds and stomach problems from hotel guests by handling articles that they have used (drinking glasses, kleenex, bed sheets). To protect yourself,

- wash your hands often with soap, especially after handling soiled linen or cleaning the bathroom

You can also get HIV and other blood-related diseases. To protect yourself,

- be very careful when you handle trash cans or bags; watch out for syringes, razor blades, and if you can, wear gloves.

## ELECTRIC SHOCK

- Do not touch or plug in electrical equipment when your hands are wet.
- Let someone know if any of the equipment has a frayed cord or is broken. Do not use it until it is fixed.

**If you need help or more information, contact:**

Name and address of distributing agency here

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# Working **Y**outh

age 14 - 18

Many young people, like you, work in foodstalls, fastfood places, cafes, big restaurants, or teashops.

You may be setting tables, serving customers, chopping food, cooking, washing dishes or cleaning up. This can be good and decent work, but there are always things that can hurt you or make you sick. Your employer is responsible for providing a safe workplace, but it is wise for you to know the dangers and what to do about them.

## The top 4 dangers for youth



- Stress and pressure to work for a long time at a fast pace
- Danger of sexual advances from customers or on the street after working too late
- Getting cut with a knife or broken glass
- Getting burned by steam, boiling liquid, or hot grease

**RESTAURANT**