

Young workers your wages your rights



U27
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 started working for your employer before 6 April 2012 and have at least one year of continuous service, you have the right to claim unfair dismissal at an employment tribunal. If you started work on or after 6 April 2012, the qualifying period rises to two years.

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



Wages

The national minimum wage is reviewed yearly. To find out the current minimum wage you are entitled to, please go to gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

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 4 1/2 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 and National Insurance contributions from your pay if you earn above a certain 'threshold'. The thresholds for tax and for National Insurance are different, and are reviewed annually. To find out the current rates, go to [Tax hmrc.gov.uk/rates/it.htm](http://Tax.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/it.htm) National Insurance hmrc.gov.uk/rates/nic.htm. 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), current figure available at hmrc.gov.uk/rates/nic.htm.



For more information on young workers:

unison.org.uk/young

For more information on your rights:

worksmart.org.uk/rights/young_workers