



# **SOLD** on SAFETY:

## A Safety and Health Guide for Young Workers in Retail

**DO YOU WORK** in a grocery, department, convenience, or other store?

This guide gives you important information about how to work safely and protect yourself from injury.

### How old do I have to be to work in retail?

Generally, you have to be at least 16-years-old. If you are under the age of 18, you cannot perform dangerous jobs such as using a baler, compactor, or meat slicer. 14- and 15-year-olds can only work in certain jobs for limited periods of time. [State laws](#) may include additional rules.

### How can I get hurt?

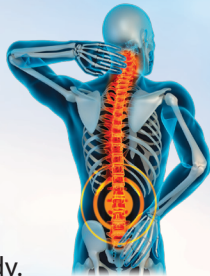
#### *Sprains and Strains*

Lifting or handling heavy or bulky objects can cause back, neck, and shoulder injuries. Standing for long periods can cause pain.

#### TO WORK SAFELY:

When lifting or carrying:

- Use wheeled carts.
- Ask for help.
- Bend your legs, not your back.
- Keep the item close to your body.
- Keep your back straight and don't twist.



When standing for long periods:

- Wear comfortable shoes.
- Stand on a mat.
- Change position often.

#### *Struck by Objects*

You can get cuts, bruises, or broken bones at work if you're struck by things like tools, carts, hand trucks, or doors.



#### TO WORK SAFELY:

- Keep your workspace neat.
- Open doors slowly. Use caution around corners and when carrying items.

- Stack materials carefully so that they won't slide or fall.
- Be aware of people, equipment, and vehicles in your work area.

#### *Slips, Trips, and Falls*

Injuries—sometimes very serious ones—at work are common from slips, trips, and falls.

#### TO WORK SAFELY:

- Avoid running or rushing.
- Report or clean up spills and trash.
- Report potentially dangerous situations, such as uneven flooring.
- Keep walkways clear.
- Wear shoes with non-skid soles.
- Avoid distractions.
- Use a ladder to reach high objects. Never stand on the top step of a ladder or climb racks or shelves.



#### *Bleach and Disinfectants*

Unprotected or accidental exposure can cause [skin irritation, burning of the throat, nose, eyes, as well as headache, dizziness, and nausea](#).

#### TO WORK SAFELY:

- Always [read and follow the labels](#) on all cleaning and disinfectant products before you use them.
- Wear label-required clothing—gloves, eye protection, shoes, and protective clothing.
- **Never mix cleaning products!** When mixed, chemicals can produce dangerous fumes.
- **Never reuse the container!**



## What are my rights at work?

### A safe and healthy workplace.



#### YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Tell your employer or OSHA about unsafe or unhealthy work conditions.
- Refuse to work if you are in serious danger, you asked your employer to fix the problem and they haven't, and you don't have time to call OSHA.
- File a complaint with OSHA within 30 days about retaliation, like being fired, because you complained about workplace safety or health or used other OSHA rights.

### Fair pay and worker compensation.

#### YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Earn at least the federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hour (the minimum wage might be higher in your state).
- Fair pay and financial help if you got hurt or sick on the job. May include compensation for medical care or work you missed when you were hurt.



### Organize with your co-workers.

#### YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Join or refuse to join a union without being punished.
- Work in a group to try to improve working conditions, pay, and benefits, which may include talking about working conditions and bringing concerns to supervisors or others without being punished.



### Work free of discrimination and harassment.

#### YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Work without being discriminated against or harassed because of [race](#), [skin color](#), [religion](#), [gender](#), [pregnancy](#), [national origin](#), [disability](#), or [genetic information](#).
- Ask for reasonable changes at your workplace because of your [religious beliefs](#) or [disability](#).

### Report concerns without punishment.

#### YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:



- Report concerns about workplace health or safety, [discrimination](#), or [harassment](#) to a manager, parent, teacher, or a government agency.
- Help someone else report these concerns.
- Participate in an investigation or lawsuit about these concerns.

**REMEMBER:** It is illegal for you to be punished for taking any of these actions!

## Who can I contact for help?

For more information or to file a complaint, contact the agencies or organizations listed below. Their services are free.

Concern	Contact
Wages, hours of work, types of jobs you can do	<b>WHD</b> —Wage & Hour Division 866-4US-WAGE TTY: 877-889-5627 <a href="http://www.youthrules.dol.gov">www.youthrules.dol.gov</a>
Safety and health information, inspections, investigations, and complaints	<b>OSHA</b> —Occupational Safety and Health Administration 800-321-OSHA TTY: 877-889-5627 <a href="http://www.osha.gov">www.osha.gov</a>
Safety & health information, statistics & research	<b>NIOSH</b> —National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health 800-CDC-INFO TTY: 888-232-6348 <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth">www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth</a>
Employee group action or union activity	<b>NLRB</b> —National Labor Relations Board 866-667-NLRB TTY: 866-315-NLRB <a href="http://www.nlrb.gov">www.nlrb.gov</a>
Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation	<b>EEOC</b> —Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 800-669-4000 TTY: 800-669-6820 <a href="http://www.youth.eeoc.gov">www.youth.eeoc.gov</a>
Safety and health information on bleach and disinfectants	<b>AAPCC</b> —American Association of Poison Control Centers 800-222-1222 <a href="http://www.aapcc.org">www.aapcc.org</a>