



Your Rights at Work: a young workers' guide

Whether you have a problem at work or not, it is always important to know your rights. Joining a trade union not only gives you protection but a greater ability for you and your colleagues to organise together in pushing for better working conditions such as better pay, better treatment at work or better health and safety. Your rights at work are also enshrined in law whether you work full-time, part-time or through an employment agency, and can never be taken away from you without a change of law in Parliament:

- 1. The right to be told in writing the terms and conditions of your employment**
Everyone is entitled to a written statement of our terms and conditions, which should include rate of pay, when you will be paid, your hours of work, your holiday entitlement and pay, and your sickness pay.
- 2. The right to a minimum wage**
From October 2015 the National Minimum Wage for workers over 21 years is currently £6.70 an hour, although it's regularly updated. For 18-20 year olds, it is £5.30 and for 16-17 year olds it is £3.87. Apprentices under 19 is £3.30.
- 3. The right to at least 28 days paid holiday leave a year**
This can include public holidays and for part-time workers is worked out in proportion for how much you work.
- 4. The right to breaks of at least 20 minutes after 6 hours of work**
You are also allowed at least 11 hours rest in each 24 hours, and a minimum of a day off a week.
- 5. The right to refuse to work more than 48 hours a week**
You can be forced to work more than this in a week, but as long as on average over 17 weeks it does not come to more than 48 hours a week. You can choose to opt out of this law if you want to, but you have to sign a written agreement to say this is the case.



6. The right to sick pay when you are ill

You are allowed what is called Statutory Sick Pay if you are off work for more than 4 days in a row, if you earn over £77 a week, and if you have been employed for more than 13 weeks. If you don't meet this criteria, you can claim Employment Support Allowance (a form of benefit).

7. The right to be free from harassment

You should all be able to work without harassment, bullying, prejudice or discrimination, which can include things like racism or sexism, our sexual orientation, if you have a disability, and other things. All workers are entitled to this, regardless of their contract.

8. The right to refuse work that is unsafe

If you find yourself in danger, or fearful of danger because of working conditions that you think are unsafe, you have the right to refuse to work.

9. The right to be accompanied

If you expect disciplinary action, you are allowed to bring someone with you to meetings about it. You can choose a colleague, or someone from a trade union, regardless of whether or not the employer has a recognised trade union in the workplace.

10. The right to defend ourselves

You all have the right to protection from being sacked if you use your legal employment rights. You also have the right to join with your fellow workers and organise yourselves collectively and join a trade union, and employers will be breaking the law if they victimise you for doing this.

REMEMBER: Legal rights at work are the cornerstone of protecting yourself at work but we cannot always expect bosses to implement them fairly. We need to stand together to ensure that the rights we have fought for are respected and increased. By joining a union and standing together we can resist exploitation, enforce our rights at work, and fight for better working terms and conditions.

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