

HANDOUT F: YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY RIGHTS ON THE JOB (EASY TO READ)

What Are My Rights on the Job? A “right” is something the law says you can do or have.

You have a right to a safe and healthy place to work. OSHA protects this right. OSHA is a part of the U.S. government.

Your state may also have a state OSHA office. You can find your local office on the OSHA website. Click on your state and your local office’s contact information will show up in a new window. You can access it here: <https://bit.ly/OSHAOffices>.

You have a right to tell the government about safety problems where you work if the people you work for don’t listen to your concerns.

You can file a complaint with OSHA at <https://bit.ly/OSHAComplaint>.

You don’t have to give your name.

OSHA says that you have a right to be taught about the hazards in your workplace and how to protect yourself.

Your boss must teach you about hazards using words that you can understand.

Your boss must teach you what to do in emergencies.

Your boss must teach you how to stay safe when you use chemicals.

OSHA says that you have a right to free safety gear to protect yourself from hazards if you need it.

This safety gear, or PPE, might be things like ear plugs, gloves, safety glasses, and special clothes.

You have a right to be paid at least “minimum wage”. Minimum wage is the amount that your state law or the federal law says a person can be paid per hour.

The U.S. minimum wage is currently \$7.25 an hour. In your state, it might be more.

Visit the U.S. Department of Labor’s State Minimum Wage Laws website to find your state’s minimum wage. You can access it here: <https://bit.ly/MinWagebyState>.

You have a right to be safe while doing your job. Some jobs are dangerous and should be done by people who are 18 years old or older.

Visit the U.S. Department of Labor’s YouthRules! website for more information on child labor laws. You can access it here: <https://bit.ly/YouthRules>.

Your state laws say that you have a right to “workers’ compensation” if you get hurt on the job.

Workers' compensation is a special type of insurance paid for by your employer. You have a right to:

Get care from doctors and nurses if you get hurt on your job. You don't have to miss time from work to get this care.

Be paid for work you miss if you get hurt on the job. Each state has its own rules for this.

Visit the U.S. Department of Labor's "State Workers' Compensation Officials" website and click on your state on the map to find the contact information for your state's Workers' Compensation office. You can access it here: <https://bit.ly/WorkersCompOffices>.

You have a right to work where people don't discriminate against you, or treat you poorly because of:

- The color of your skin
- Whether you are a man or woman
- Whether or not you are disabled
- Your age
- Your religion or spiritual beliefs
- Whether you are going to have a baby
- Where you were born
- Whether a disease runs in your family.

You have a right not to be exposed to jokes or pictures that offend you or make you uncomfortable.

You have a right to be free from sexual harassment. No one should put pressure on you for sex.

You have a right to not see hurtful things written about you on walls or other places at work.

If you feel these rights have been ignored, or if you would like to know more, visit the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's "Filing A Charge of Discrimination" website. You can access it here: <https://bit.ly/EEOCDiscrimination>.

You have a right to ask for changes to your workplace (called "reasonable accommodations") because of a disability or health problem or to allow you to practice your religion as you wish.

You have a right to talk with other workers about how much money you make.

You have a right to talk with other workers about your job site and workplace safety and job hazards.

You have a right to help someone who is inspecting your workplace, which means looking at your workplace to see if any laws are being broken. These laws might be ones that protect:

- Your and others' safety
- Children who work
- How much you get paid

You from discrimination or harassment. Discrimination is when someone treats you poorly because of who you are. Harassment is when somebody bothers you on purpose and repeatedly in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

You have a right to be free from retaliation—this means that you cannot be punished for speaking with inspectors at your worksite. Your boss can't treat workers worse or fire them because they answer questions from someone who inspects your workplace.

You have a right to join or start a union.

A union is where workers join with one another so they can change the place they work.

You can work together to make your workplace better, and for better pay and benefits.

You have a right to learn about people who have gotten hurt or sick where you work.

You have a right get copies of the tests or studies that may have been done to find safety and health problems where you work.

You have a right to get copies of papers your bosses keep that talk about your health. This includes your evaluations and any health information. The information must be given to you in a way you are able to understand.

You have a right to tell OSHA if your workplace punishes you because you asked the government for a safety inspection. You shouldn't be punished because you take advantage of the rights the law gives to workers.