

LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

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BC EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS REGULATION & YOUTH WORKERS

In the spring of 2022, the BC Government conducted its [public engagement process](#) regarding hazardous work protections for youth with the purpose to gather input to inform the development of a regulation that would define which types of work are too hazardous for young people under the age of 19. On October 11, 2022, the BC Government issued this [news release](#) announcing that effective January 1, 2023, the BC Employment Standards Regulation will be amended to prescribe minimum ages of 16 to 18 for certain types of work that is too hazardous for young workers.

This work follows previous changes to the Employment Standards Regulation related to raising the general working age in BC from 12 to 16, and defining the types of jobs appropriate for those under 16 (see Legislative Briefing published on [July 22, 2021](#)).

Occupations / Situations Appropriate for Youth Based on Age

A Backgrounder in the [news release](#) identifies (1) activities that can be undertaken by youth workers at the minimum age of 16, and (2) activities that can be undertaken by youth workers at the minimum age of 18.

As stated in the news release “[t]o ensure youth can still access important apprenticeship and training opportunities, the age restrictions will not apply to industry training programs overseen by SkilledTradesBC. The regulations come into effect on Jan. 1, 2023, so that employers have time to adjust the work performed by existing young employees. As well, current employees who are within six months of reaching the prescribed age will be excluded from the age requirements.”

Minimum Age of 16:	Minimum Age of 18:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. construction;2. silviculture;3. forest firefighting; and4. working from heights that require fall protection	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. tree falling and logging;2. using a chainsaw;3. work in a production process at a pulp, paper, saw, shake or shingle mill;4. work in a production process at a foundry, metal processing or metal fabrication operation, refinery or smelter;5. powerline construction or maintenance where an electrical hazard exists;6. oil or gas field servicing and drilling;



	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. work with dangerous equipment in fish, meat or poultry processing facilities;8. silica process/exposure to silica dust;9. work in which a worker is or may be exposed to potentially harmful levels of asbestos;10. exposure to harmful levels of radiation;11. working in a confined space or underground workings; and12. work requiring a respirator.
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Other Youth Work

RES has published three Legislative Briefings since 2019 regarding BC Government’s work on youth workers. See Legislative Briefings that were published on [May 1, 2019](#), [May 31, 2019](#), and [July 22, 2021](#).

QUESTIONS?

If you have any comments or questions about this update, please e-mail RES360@metrovancover.org or call 604-451-6558.

SOURCES

“New rules increase safety for young workers.” Government of British Columbia. October 11, 2022.
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022LBR0013-001503>

“Hazardous work protections for youth” Government of British Columbia. April 21, 2022.
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/hazardous-work-protections-for-youth/>