

“Please Sir, Can I Work Some More?": Child Labor Law Changes Imminent

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Changes to Wisconsin's child labor laws are on the horizon. On May 23, 2017, the Wisconsin legislature passed a bill that will eliminate the need for 16 and 17-year-olds to obtain work permits. The Bill, [2017 Assembly Bill 25](#), is currently awaiting Governor Scott Walker's signature before it will take effect.

If signed into law (and it likely will be in the next few days):

1. 16 and 17-year-olds will no longer need parental consent before obtaining employment; and
2. employers will not be required to furnish information to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) regarding the 16 and 17-year-old's working conditions, hours of work, etc. before the minor can begin working.



The Bill will also repeal Wis. Stat. § 103.19 and allow licenses to be granted for children to perform in shows.

Another consequence of the Bill will be reduced funding for the DWD and local governments due to the elimination of the \$10 permit fee. The permit officers at the DWD are funded, in part, by the child

labor permit fee. The Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau estimates that both state and local governments will lose approximately \$730,000 in revenue as a result of the changes.

While the permit requirements for 16 and 17-year-olds are changing, the rules governing their employment largely remain the same. The Bill **will not** change the maximum hour restrictions, meal requirements or the prohibitions on the type of work minors may perform. Employers must be aware of and abide by the restrictions and prohibitions that apply to working minors. Failure to comply with Wisconsin child labor laws can result in the employer being assessed penalties and fines, and in some cases imprisonment.

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