

What We Know

ARTICLES & INSIGHTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[Connie Elder Carrigan](#) is a partner in the firm, with a practice concentration in Business Law. Her focus is assisting clients with issues regarding employment law, business advice and litigation, construction law, equipment leasing and creditor bankruptcy. Connie has lectured on topics ranging from employment law, bankruptcy, and equipment leasing to construction law.

NC Labor Dept. Revamps Work Permits for Youth Just in Time for Summer

June 8, 2021 | by

With the advent of summer, many employers hire high school youth as seasonal employees. Effective May 3, 2021, the North Carolina Wage and Hour Bureau, a division of the North Carolina Department of Labor (DOL) has updated its process for obtaining the necessary certificates for employing workers under the age of 18. Youth employment certificates, commonly referred to as *work permits*, are required for teen workers and are designed to alert such workers, their parents or guardians, and their employers of certain prohibited jobs and hour limits for youth employees. Labor Commissioner Josh Dobson stated that the new procedure is intended to streamline the process and “to better ensure that our state’s young employees end up working in safe and acceptable jobs.”

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RULES IN NORTH CAROLINA REGARDING PERMITTED WORK HOURS AND DURATION

- In North Carolina, 14- and 15-year-olds may only work between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. when school is in session and no more than three hours on school days.
- In addition, 14- and 15-year-olds are not allowed to work more than eight hours per day on days school is not in session – for a total maximum of 40 hours per week
- Also, 14- and 15-year-olds are not allowed to work more than 18 hours per week when school is in session.
- From June 1 through Labor Day, 14- and 15-year olds are permitted to work between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. on any given workday.

Teens under 18 years of age and older than 13 years of age are permitted to work in most office settings or in retail and foodservice establishments. However, they may not work in processing, mining, or in workplaces in which goods are manufactured because of the hazardous nature of the work being performed. If an employer has an on-premises ABC permit, teens between the ages of 14 and 16 may only work on the outside grounds with the written consent of a parent or guardian so long as the youth is not involved in the preparation, serving, dispensing, or sale of alcoholic beverages. As an example, DOL states that a 14- or 15-year-old may work at the tennis courts or the golf course of a private club but is not permitted to work as a server or busboy if alcohol is served inside the premises.

HOW TO OBTAIN A YOUTH WORK PERMIT IN NORTH CAROLINA

The process for obtaining the necessary signatures for such permits has been streamlined by enabling registrants to electronically sign applications located on the NCDOL website for youth employment certificates. Overall, the application process involves four steps, each of which generates an email that prompts the next step. Permits must be signed by the youth, by the parent or guardian, and by the employer prior to commencing employment.

Step #1: Applying for the Youth Employment Certificate

- The link for applying for a youth employment certificate is located on the home page of the DOL website: <https://www.labor.nc.gov>. Once the youth enters their initial information, DOL will assign a unique Youth Employment Identification (YEID) number. The YEID may be used for multiple employers.

Step #2: Employer Completes Youth Employment Certificate Online Process

- Once an offer of employment has been extended, the youth should provide their YEID to the employer, who will then go to the DOL website and click on the employer tab to begin the Youth Employment Certificate process.

Step #3: Employer and Youth Digitally Sign Certificate

- Once the employer completes and signs the certificate, the youth will receive an email requesting the youth's electronic signature and their parent's or guardian's contact information.

Step #4: Parents or Guardian Signs Certificate

- Upon completion of the youth's electronic signature, their parent or guardian will receive a prompt to sign the certificate. Once all parties have electronically signed the certificate, the youth may begin work.

The certificate must be retained by the employer for a period of three (3) years after the youth turns 18 or separates from employment. It is not necessary to mail the completed certificate to the DOL.

If you have questions about the North Carolina youth employment certificate process or any other employment-related matter, please call [Connie Carrigan](mailto:ccarrigan@smithdebnamlaw.com) at (919) 250-2119 or e-mail her at ccarrigan@smithdebnamlaw.com.

919.250.2000
mail@smithdebnamlaw.com

The Landmark Center
4601 Six Forks Road, Suite 400
Raleigh, NC 27609

Phone: 919.250.2000
Fax: 919.250.2100

171 Church Street
Suite 120C
Charleston, SC 29401

Phone: 843.714.2530
Fax: 843.714.2541