



Home > Children's
employment > Hours of work for
children

Hours of work for children

Children can be employed for a restricted number of hours per day, during certain times of the day and for a limited number of days per week. Hours of work vary according to the age of the child and the type of work.

Authorised employers are responsible for making sure the employed child's hours of work meet these conditions. Special permission is required for babies under 12 weeks.

Entertainment and exhibition

This includes film, television, radio, shopping centre performances, still photography, the production of images for broadcasting, modelling, exhibitions and performance activities.

Age of child	Max days per week	Hours during which child may be employed	Max hours per day
Under 6 months	1 day	6.00am - 6.00pm	4 hours
6 months to under 3 years	2 days	6.00am - 6.00pm	4 hours
3 years to under 8 years	4 days	6.00am - 11.00pm	6 hours
8 years to under 15 years (or 16 years for models)	5 days	6:00am - 11:00pm	8 hours

Live performance

This applies to live performances (including theatrical, musical and circus performances) other than a performance referred to in clause 18 of the Code of Practice.

Age of child	Max days per week	Hours during which child may be employed	Max hours per day
Under 6 months	1 day	6.00am - 6.00pm	4 hours
6 months to under 3 years	2 days	6.00am - 6.00pm	4 hours
3 years to under 6 years	4 days	6.00am - 9.00pm	4 hours
6 years to under 8 years	4 days	6.00am - 10.00pm	6 hours
8 years to under 15 years	4 days	6.00am - 11.00pm	8 hours

Further limitations on hours of work

All employers need to make sure that:

- a child works only one shift per day
- a child does not start work less than 12 hours after previously

finishing work

- a child works for four hours or less on the same day as attending or receiving schooling
- appropriate rest breaks are provided to children. Find out more about rest breaks
- a child does not work later than 9:00pm on a night before attending or receiving schooling
- a child's combined work and schooling hours during one week is 50 hours or less.

Rest breaks

Children are required to have regular rest breaks during their work day. The minimum requirement for rest breaks is a one hour rest break every four hours.

In addition, within any four hour period, employers are required to:

- provide an appropriate number of breaks
- make sure that the breaks are of an appropriate duration
- take into account the needs of the child and the nature of the work the child is engaged in when providing breaks
- comply with the maximum hours of work allowed. Read more about hours of work.

What is a rest break?

A rest break is when a child completely stops any work activity. If a child is working indoors, a child could go outdoors for fresh air. It might also mean having lunch or a snack, leaving the set or spending some quiet

time in another room.

Children should not travel to set, travel between locations, change costumes, rehearse or learn lines during a rest break.

Rest breaks and maximum hours of employment

Age of child	Maximum hours of employment	Rest break after 4 hours	Total time on set/location (including rest break)
Under 6 months to under 3 years	4 hours	N/A	4 hours
3 years to under 8 years	6 hours	1 hour	7 hours
8 years to under 15 years (or 16 years for models)	8 hours	1 hour	9 hours

The mandatory one hour rest break is not calculated as part of the maximum hours of employment. All other rest breaks are included in the maximum hours of employment.

Tips for providing breaks

We recommend a 10 minute rest break every hour for most children. Employers can provide more or less breaks during the day, taking into account the age and needs of the child and their work activity.

Some suggestions for breaks:

- plan children's breaks when preparing the schedule
- provide longer or more frequent breaks for children involved in high impact or high risk activities such as dancing, outdoor sports, harnessing or rigging, emotional or distressing content
- consult with the child and parent or supervisor about the number and duration of rest breaks
- some children might feel embarrassed to ask for a toilet break, so think about when children are likely to need one and plan these into your schedule
- always provide extra breaks if a child is showing signs of tiredness, frustration, anxiousness, hyperactivity, distress or if they ask to speak to their parent.

Travel time

When a child lives more than 90 minutes travel time from the place of employment, you are required to reduce the maximum amount of time the child can be employed.

A child has up to 90 minutes to travel from home to the place of employment, and another 90 minutes to travel from the place of

employment back home. Any time in excess of 90 minutes in either direction becomes part of the calculated employment time for that child, and reduces the maximum time the child can be employed.

For example, if a child, who can be employed for up to 8 hours, takes 2 hours to travel to the place of employment, and 2 hours to travel home, the excess time of 30 minutes in each direction, 1 hour in total, becomes part of the employment time. In this case, due to the excess travel time, the child can only be employed for up to 7 hours at the place of employment.