

Fact Sheet # 57: Hazardous Occupations Order No. 12 Rules for Employing Youth and the Loading of Power-Driven Balers and Compactors under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

This fact sheet provides general information concerning the application of the federal youth employment provisions as they relate to the loading, unloading and operation of scrap paper balers and paper box compactors. The federal youth employment provisions of the [FLSA](#) are administered by the Wage and Hour Division (WHD), part of the Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration. For detailed information about these federal youth provisions, please read Regulations, [29 CFR Part 570.63](#).

The Department of Labor is committed to helping young workers find positive, appropriate and safe employment experiences. The youth employment provisions of the FLSA were enacted to protect the educational opportunities of minors and prohibit their employment in jobs and under conditions which are detrimental to their health or well-being. These provisions include restrictions on the types of jobs that minors may perform.

One such provision, Hazardous Occupations Order No. 12 (HO 12), generally prohibits minors less than 18 years of age from loading, operating, and unloading certain power-driven paper processing machines, including scrap paper balers, paper box compactors, guillotine paper cutters or shears, platen printing presses, and envelope die-cutting presses. **The prohibitions concerning balers and compactors extend to equipment that processes other materials in addition to paper, such as trash, foam rubber, metal, food waste, plastic and fabric.**

Limited Exception Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to Load – But Not Operate Or Unload – Certain Balers and Compactors

HO 12 contains a limited exception that permits 16- and 17-year-olds to load, **but not operate or unload**, certain scrap paper balers and paper box compactors **only if all of the following five requirements are met:**

1. The employer must ensure that the equipment meets, and continues to meet, the following American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards:
 - For scrap paper balers: Standard ANSI-S245.5-1990 or Standard ANSI Z245.5-1997
 - For paper box compactors: Standard ANSI Z245.2-1992 or Standard ANSI Z245.2-1997

ANSI is a national organization that coordinates the development of voluntary, consensus standards in a wide range of areas, including product and worker safety. The Department of Labor has used ANSI standards in other contexts as expressions of the best available technology in the safety area. The ANSI standards for scrap paper balers and paper box compactors govern the manufacture and modification of the equipment, the operation and maintenance of the equipment, and employee training. ¹

2. Prior to permitting minors under age 18 to load materials into balers and compactors, the employer must **post a notice on each piece of equipment that:**
 - identifies the specific ANSI standard listed above that the employer is stating that the equipment to be loaded by the young workers meets; and
 - states that 16- and 17-year-olds may only load this piece of equipment; and
 - states that no one under 18 years of age may operate or unload this piece of equipment.

There is no proscribed form that the notice must follow, but it must contain all the information listed above. Some employers are keeping their young workers safe by also posting “**Do Not Load**” notices on those machines that do not meet the requirements of this limited exemption and therefore are “out of bounds” to workers under the age of 18 years.

3. The baler or compactor must include an on-off switch incorporating a key-lock or other system, and the control of the system must be maintained in the custody of employees who are 18 years of age or older.
4. The on-off switch of the equipment must be maintained in an off position when the equipment is not being operated.
5. The equipment cannot be operated while it is being loaded.

Where to Obtain Additional Information

For more information on the FLSA youth employment provisions, including a complete list of all hazardous occupation orders, visit the YouthRules! Web site at www.youthrules.dol.gov. For additional information on the Fair Labor Standards Act, visit the Wage and Hour Division Web site: <http://www.wagehour.dol.gov> and/or call our toll-free information and helpline, available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in your time zone, 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243).

When state youth employment laws differ from the federal provisions, an employer must comply with the higher standard. Links to your state labor department can be found at www.dol.gov/esa/contacts/state_of.htm.

This publication is for general information and is not to be considered in the same light as official statements of position contained in the regulations.

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¹ Copies of the applicable ANSI standards are available for inspection at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C., 20408, at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Docket Office at Room N2625, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, D.C., 20210, and at any of the OSHA regional offices. Copies of these standards are available for purchase at the American National Standards Institute, 23 West 43rd St., Fourth Floor, New York, NY, 10036.