

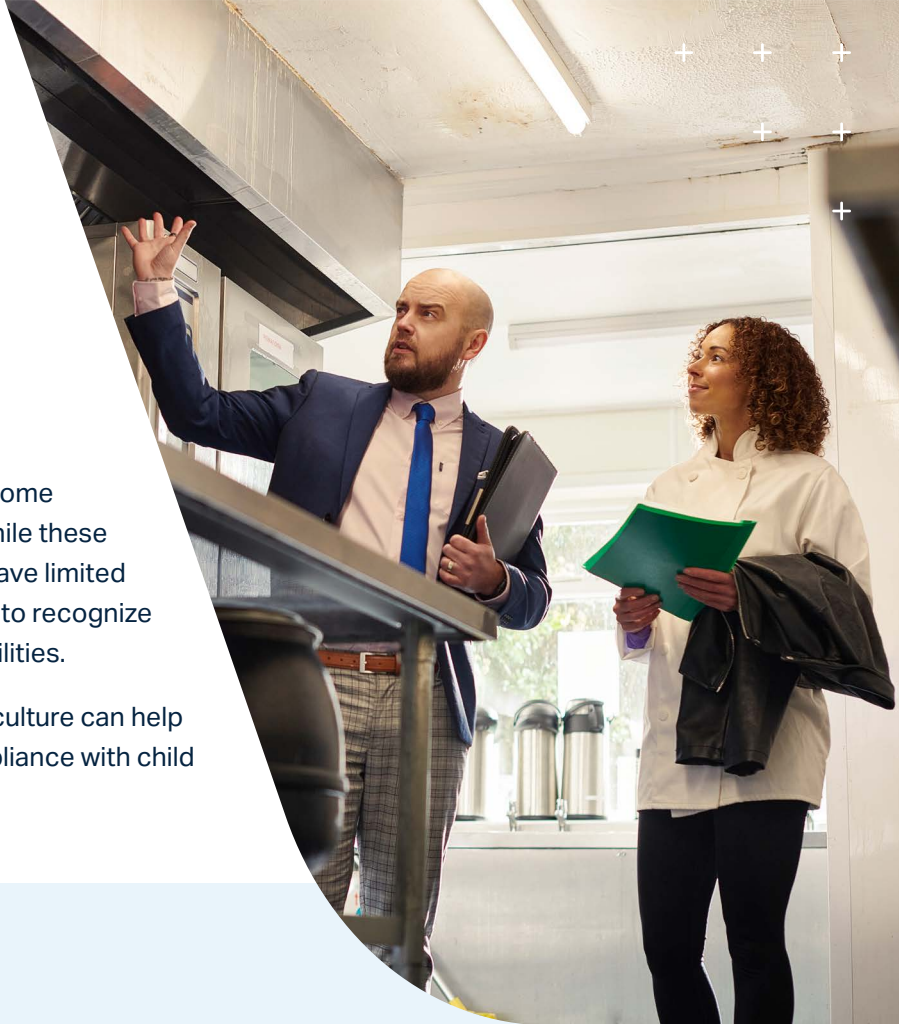


Protecting **Young Workers**

Safety & Training Best Practices for Seasonal and First-Time Employees

As schools break for summer, many businesses welcome young and first-time workers into their workforce. While these employees bring enthusiasm and energy, they may have limited workplace experience and require additional training to recognize hazards, work safely, and understand their responsibilities.

A structured onboarding process and strong safety culture can help reduce injuries, improve retention, and support compliance with child labor laws.



1. Start with a Safety-First Orientation

Before young employees begin work:

- + Review emergency procedures and evacuation routes.
- + Identify locations of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and emergency exits.
- + Explain how to report injuries, hazards, and near-miss incidents.
- + Establish a "Stop and Ask" culture where employees feel comfortable asking questions.

BEST PRACTICE

Keep orientation sessions interactive, visual, and hands-on to improve retention and engagement.

2. Focus on Common Workplace Hazards

Young workers are more likely to be injured when they are unfamiliar with workplace risks.

KEY TRAINING TOPICS

- + Slip, trip, and fall prevention
- + Burn prevention and handling hot items
- + Knife and sharp-object safety
- + Proper lifting techniques
- + Chemical handling and PPE requirements
- + Appropriate footwear and dress standards

RISK MANAGEMENT TIP

Provide frequent reinforcement of key safety concepts rather than overwhelming employees with information during their first day.

3. Comply with Child Labor Laws

Employers should understand and follow all applicable federal and state regulations governing minor employees.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- + Verify age documentation.
- + Understand hour and scheduling restrictions.
- + Ensure minors are not operating prohibited equipment.
- + Review labor law requirements annually.

EXAMPLES OF COMMONLY RESTRICTED EQUIPMENT

- + Meat slicers
- + Trash compactors
- + Certain power-driven bakery equipment

4. Reinforce Safety Through Ongoing Training

Safety training should not end after orientation.

EFFECTIVE METHODS

- + Pre-shift safety reminders
- + Weekly safety topics
- + Brief scenario-based discussions
- + Hands-on demonstrations

EXAMPLES

- + Responding to spills and wet floors
- + Handling hot grease or oil splashes
- + Managing difficult customer interactions



5. Teach Situational Awareness

Many young workers have never worked in fast-paced environments.

ENCOURAGE AWARENESS OF:

- + Surrounding foot traffic
- + Wet floor conditions
- + Hot surfaces and equipment
- + Safe walking paths
- + Customer behavior and potential conflicts
- + Distractions such as mobile phones

Awareness and communication are key components of workplace safety.

6. Encourage Employees to Speak Up

Young employees may hesitate to report concerns due to fear of getting in trouble.

PROMOTE REPORTING OF:

- + Injuries and near misses
- + Unsafe conditions
- + Equipment concerns
- + Harassment or inappropriate behavior
- + Requests for assistance with lifting or difficult tasks

Managers should respond positively and consistently to reinforce trust and accountability.

7. Prevent Heat Stress & Fatigue

Summer work environments can increase the risk of heat-related illness and fatigue.

PREVENTION MEASURES

- + Encourage regular hydration.
- + Schedule breaks appropriately.
- + Rotate employees working in high-heat areas.
- + Train employees to recognize signs and symptoms of heat stress.
- + Encourage proper nutrition during long shifts.

Fatigue and heat stress can significantly increase the likelihood of workplace injuries.

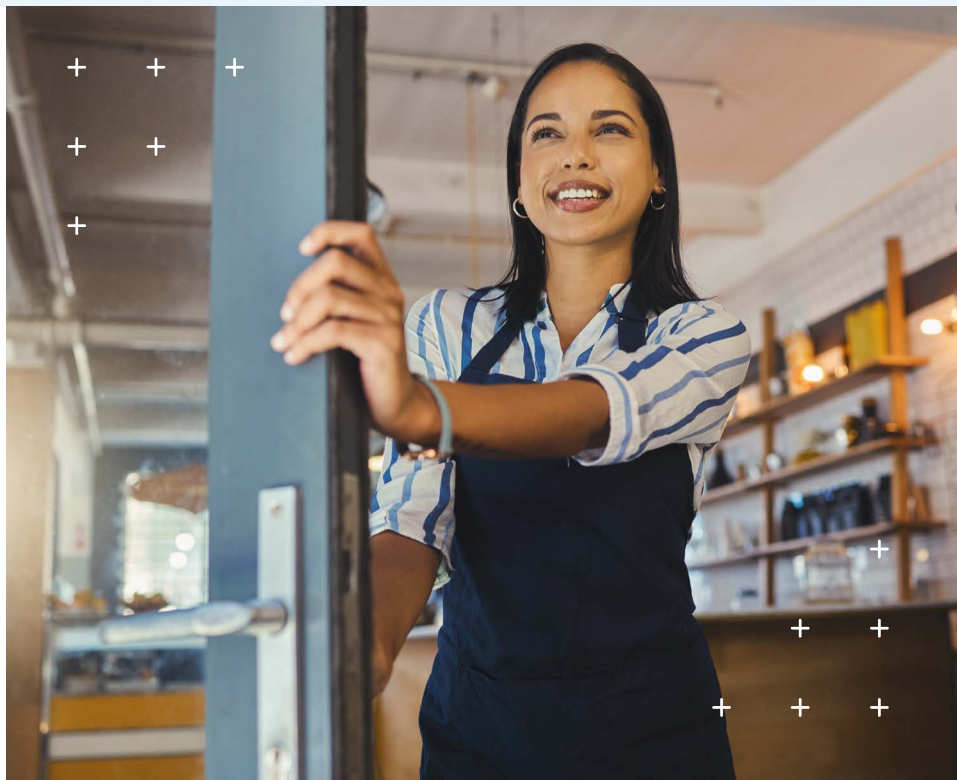
8. Establish Clear Safety Expectations

Young workers perform best when expectations are clearly communicated.

HELPFUL TOOLS

- + Opening and closing checklists
- + Cleaning procedures
- + PPE reminders
- + Injury response instructions
- + Chemical safety guidelines

Consistent procedures help employees work safely and confidently.





Quick Safety Checklist

- ☐ Safety orientation completed
- ☐ Emergency procedures reviewed
- ☐ Child labor requirements verified
- ☐ Hazard-specific training provided
- ☐ PPE requirements explained
- ☐ Heat stress awareness training completed
- ☐ Reporting procedures communicated
- ☐ Ongoing safety coaching scheduled

Why Protecting Young Workers Matters

Strong training and supervision programs can:

- + Reduce workplace injuries
- + Improve employee confidence and performance
- + Strengthen regulatory compliance
- + Increase employee retention
- + Promote a positive safety culture

Pro Tip

The first 30 days of employment are often the highest-risk period for workplace injuries. Increase supervision and coaching during this time to help new employees build safe work habits.



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NPN 1316541 | IMA, Inc dba IMA Insurance Services
California Lic #0H64724 | CT-IMA-F-R-RC-062326

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