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Departments of Labor & Workforce Development  
Division of Occupational Safety  
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## Summer Camp Employment Guidelines

**Issued: April 2003**

Summer camps, like other Massachusetts employers, are subject to various employment laws that govern employee wages, hours, and other employment-related matters. One of these laws is the Massachusetts Minimum Fair Wage Law, G.L. c. 151 ("the Minimum Wage Law"). The requirements of the Minimum Wage Law are further defined by Regulations.

The Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) is responsible for interpreting the Minimum Wage Law and Regulations. The Office of the Attorney General enforces the Minimum Wage Law, Regulations, and other employment laws that set many of the standards that must be met when employing counselors and other employees at summer camps. Additional standards applicable to summer camps are set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and can be found in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations. See 105 C.M.R. §430.000, et seq.

DOS provides the following Guidelines to assist summer camps in understanding the Minimum Fair Wage Law and Regulations and how they apply to summer camps. **The Guidelines have been updated to incorporate recent amendments to the regulations, effective April 25, 2003.** We have also included in these Guidelines references to several other employment laws that apply to summer camp employers. We hope that you find these Guidelines helpful. If you have any questions about the applicability of the Minimum Wage Law or Regulations, please feel free to contact DOS Legal Counsel, Lisa Price, at (617) 727-3452, ext. 135. If you have any questions about the enforcement of the Minimum Wage Law, Regulations, or the applicability or enforcement of the other employment laws discussed herein, please contact the Office of the Attorney General's Fair Labor and Business Practices Division at (617) 727-3476.

## **Minimum Wage**

The Minimum Wage Law requires that employees be paid no less than the statutory minimum wage, currently \$6.75 per hour.<sup>1</sup> G.L. c. 151, §1. However, some exceptions may apply to summer camps.

The Minimum Wage Law and Regulations allow for payment of a sub-minimum wage to students employed as camp counselors or counselor trainees, provided the camp obtains an Employer License, also known as a waiver, from DOS. 455 C.M.R. §2.05(1)(c). Student employees are considered camp counselors or counselor trainees if they are directly involved in camp programming and camper supervision. 455 C.M.R. §2.05(1)(c). The waiver permits the camp to pay these student workers an hourly wage of no less than 80% of the minimum wage, or \$5.40 per hour. An application for a waiver of minimum wage for these employees may be found in Appendix A.

## **Overtime Compensation**

The Minimum Wage Law also includes provisions requiring most employers to pay overtime compensation (time and one-half) for hours worked in excess of 40 in a given workweek. Overtime pay is calculated on a *weekly* basis. Again, there are some exceptions that apply to summer camps.

Summer camps operated by non-profit charitable corporations are not required to pay overtime compensation to their employees. G.L. c. 151, §1A(18). No waiver application is necessary.

For-profit summer camps must pay overtime compensation for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a given work week unless they obtain a waiver by means of a seasonal business determination. G.L. c. 151, §1A(9). To be eligible for a seasonal business determination, and thus an exemption from the requirement to pay overtime, the for-profit summer camp must operate during a period or accumulated periods of not more than 120 days per year. An application for a seasonal business determination may be found in Appendix B.

## **Minimum Wage Regulations**

In addition to the Minimum Wage Law, summer camps must comply with Regulations that apply to all employees regardless of whether or not they have received a wage waiver. These regulations include, but are not limited to, the following:

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<sup>1</sup>Effective January 1, 2001.

1. When a camp employee is required to be on duty at the camp for 24 hours or more, the employer and employee may agree prior to performance of the work to exclude bona fide meal periods and a bona fide regularly scheduled sleeping period of not more than eight hours from working time, provided the employer provides adequate sleeping quarters and the employee can usually enjoy an uninterrupted night's sleep.<sup>2</sup> If no prior agreement is made, sleeping time and meal time will constitute working time. If the sleeping period is interrupted by a call to duty, all such time on duty must be counted as working time. If the sleeping period is interrupted to such an extent that the employee cannot get a reasonable night's sleep, the entire period must be counted as working time. 455 C.M.R. §2.03(3)(b).
2. If a camp employee resides at the summer camp on a permanent basis or for extended periods of time, not all time spent on the premises is considered working time. The employer and the employee may make any reasonable agreement as to hours worked which takes into consideration all of the pertinent facts. 455 C.M.R. §2.03(3)(c).
3. Camps must keep a true and accurate record of the name, complete address, social security number, and occupation of each employee, of the amount paid each pay period to each employee, the hours worked each day, and the dates on which each employee worked each week. 455 C.M.R. §2.06(2). These records are subject to inspection by the Office of the Attorney General.
4. Camps that require uniform deposits should ask for and review a copy of the DOS Uniform Deposit Waiver Policy. Additionally, camps may not deduct the cost of laundering uniforms from an employee's wages if doing so would reduce that employee's wage below the basic minimum wage (or approved sub-minimum wage for workers subject to a waiver). 455 C.M.R. §2.04(1). If camp staff are responsible for cleaning their own uniforms, the camp must reimburse actual costs for dry-cleaning, commercial laundering, or other special treatment to the extent that these costs reduce the employee's wage below the basic minimum wage (or approved sub-minimum wage for workers subject to a waiver). Where uniforms are made of "wash and wear" materials, that do not require special treatment, and that are routinely washed and dried with other personal garments, the camp need not reimburse employees for uniform maintenance costs. 455 C.M.R. §2.04(2)(a).
5. Camps may take deductions from employees' wages for lodging and meals. The maximum

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<sup>2</sup>Camp employees under the age of 18 who are expected to be on duty or on call at night may only work during the hours permitted by the Massachusetts Child Labor laws. (See pages 4-6.) Additionally, a federal law may apply to some employers which prohibits minors under the age of 16 from working more than 40 hours in a week. Otherwise, the Massachusetts restriction applies, which allows minors under the age of 16 to work no more than 48 hours per week. G.L. c. 149, §65.

allowable deductions are as follows:

For lodging, a camp may deduct \$35.00 per week from employee's wages for a room occupied by one person; \$30.00 per week for a room occupied by two persons; and \$25.00 per week for a room occupied by three or more persons.

455 C.M.R. §2.04(1)(a).

For meals, a camp may deduct \$1.50 for breakfast; \$2.25 for lunch; and \$2.25 for dinner. However, no deductions for meals may be taken without the written consent of the employee, and no such deduction may exceed the actual cost to the employer. 455 C.M.R. §2.04(1)(b).

For illustrative purposes, we provide the following examples of wage calculations:

The first is a calculation of the minimum weekly gross pay for a student camp counselor subject to a wage waiver who works in a **residential camp**. This calculation assumes that the student 1) is provided three meals a day seven days a week, 2) has provided written consent for the meals deduction, 3) is provided a room shared by three or more persons, and 4) works 40 hours during the week.

40 hours x \$5.40 per hour (\$6.75 x 80%)	\$216.00
Breakfasts (\$1.50 x 7 days)	- 10.50
Lunches (\$2.25 x 7)	- 15.75
Dinners (\$2.25 x 7)	- 15.75
Lodging in a room occupied by three or more persons	- 25.00
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	\$149.00

The following is a calculation of the minimum weekly gross pay for a student camp counselor subject to a wage waiver who works in a **day camp**. This calculation assumes that the student 1) is provided lunch five days a week, 2) has provided written consent for the meals deduction, and 4) works 40 hours during the week.

40 hours x \$5.40 per hour (\$6.75 x 80%)	\$216.00
Lunches (\$2.25 x 5)	- 11.25
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	\$204.75

## Other Massachusetts Wage and Hour and Child Labor Laws

The following is a compilation of other laws that apply to Massachusetts employers, including summer camps. These laws are enforced by the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General:

1. Camps must comply with other Massachusetts wage and hour laws which include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Camps must pay weekly or bi-weekly the wages earned to each employee within six days of the end of the pay period. G.L. c. 149, §148.
  - b. Camps must provide a day of rest in seven for all employees. G.L. c. 149, §§48 & 51.
  - c. Camps may not require any employee to work more than six hours without a 30-minute meal break. G.L. c. 149, §100.
2. Camps must provide statutory workers' compensation coverage for all employees. G.L. c. 152, §25A.
3. Camps must comply with all requirements of the Massachusetts child labor laws including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Camps must receive and maintain on file an employment permit for every 14 and 15 year-old who works at the camp. The camp must first fill out a Promise of Employment card for the specific job and then ensure that the student obtains a permit from the school in the city or town in which the minor lives. Education certificates are required for 16 and 17 year-olds who perform certain types of jobs at summer camps. These certificates may be obtained from the superintendent of schools in the city or town where the minor lives. A permit or educational certificate must be on file at the work site before the minor may begin work at the camp. Minors who live outside of Massachusetts must obtain their permits or certificates from the school department in the city or town in which the camp is located. G.L. 149, §§86 & 89.
  - b. Camps must post a work schedule for minors at the beginning of each week. G.L. c. 149, §74.
  - c. A list of all minors employed by camps must be maintained and made available for inspection. G.L. c. 149, §86.

- d. Camps must observe the following restrictions on the hours worked by minors: (Note: These reflect the requirements of the Massachusetts child labor laws. In most camps, the federal child labor laws also apply and these laws may be more stringent. An asterisk is placed next to any requirements where the federal law is more restrictive.)
- i. Minors aged 14 and 15 may work only between the hours of 6:30 a.m.\* and 7:00 p.m. (9:00 p.m. from July 1 through Labor Day). G.L. c. 149, §65.
  - ii. Minors aged 14 and 15 may not work more than eight hours a day within a nine consecutive hour period or more than 48 hours a week.\* G.L. c. 149, §65.
  - iii. Minors aged 16 and 17 may work only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. G.L. c. 149, §66.
  - iv. Minors aged 16 and 17 may work no more than nine hours a day. G.L. c. 149, §67.
  - v. Minors under the age of 18 may not work more than six days in any week (i.e., the minor must be given one full day of rest each week). G.L. c. 149, §§65 & 67.
- e. Camps must observe the prohibitions on hazardous tasks for minors. G.L. c. 149, §§60, 61 & 62.

If you have any questions about the Massachusetts wage and hour laws, or child labor laws, included in this section, please contact the Office of the Attorney General's Fair Labor and Business Practices Division at (617) 727-3476.

#### **APPENDIX A**

(See Download Page for Application)

[www.mass.gov/dos/forms.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dos/forms.htm)

#### **APPENDIX B**

(See Download page for Application)

[www.mass.gov/dos/forms.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dos/forms.htm)



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
**DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY**

[www.mass.gov/dos](http://www.mass.gov/dos)

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## **Application for Waiver of Minimum Wage for Student Employees of Summer Camps 455 CMR 2.03(6)(a)**

Pursuant to 455 CMR 2.03(6)(a), the Division of Occupational Safety may issue to any summer camp a license permitting payment of not less than 80% of the basic minimum wage rate (\$6.75 per hour<sup>1</sup> x 80% = \$5.40 per hour) to students enrolled in and employed by the camp.

To apply for this annual waiver, the employer must submit this completed application form, along with a fee of one hundred dollars (\$100). The fee must be submitted in the form of a money order or check, payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the amount of the entire annual fee. This fee is not refundable in the event that this application is denied.

Please submit the completed application form and application fee to:

**Division of Occupational Safety  
Minimum Wage Program  
399 Washington Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Boston, MA 02108**

Your application form and fee should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the requested date of applicability.

If you have any questions regarding this application, please contact  
Lisa Price at (617) 727-3452, ext. 135 or send email to [Lisa.Price@state.ma.us](mailto:Lisa.Price@state.ma.us)

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<sup>1</sup>Effective January 1, 2001.



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of Labor  
Division of Occupational Safety  
399 Washington Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
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Application for Waiver of  
**Minimum Wage for Student  
Employees of Summer Camps**  
455 CMR 2.03(6)(a)

**Please provide the following information:**

1. **Name of summer camp:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Business address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Summer address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Winter address:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Name of owner, operator, and contact person and title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. **Is the camp a residential or day camp?:** \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Is the camp a for-profit or non-profit camp?:<sup>2</sup>** \_\_\_\_\_  
**If non-profit, please provide a copy of the IRS tax exempt status letter.**
7. **The dates of operation:** \_\_\_\_\_
8. **The number of students to be employed at sub-minimum wage:** \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>2</sup>Note: If the camp is operated by a charitable non-profit corporation, it is not subject to the overtime provisions of the Minimum Wage Law. M.G.L. c. 151, §1A(18). If the camp is operated on a for-profit basis, it is subject to the overtime provisions of Minimum Wage Law, M.G.L. c. 151, §1A, i.e. employees must be paid not less than 1½ times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one week, unless the camp is granted a separate overtime waiver pursuant to M.G.L. c. 151, §1A(9).

*Application for Waiver of Minimum Wage for Student Employees of Summer Camps -Page 2 of 2*

9. A list of the duties to be performed by the student employees: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The proposed hourly wage(s) to be paid to student employees, before any deductions are made: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. List all deductions from wages (include both items and amounts), other than those required by law (e.g. lodging deduction of \$20.00):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. a. Is this the camp's first application? Yes / No  
b. If this is not the first application, when was the last application made? \_\_\_\_\_  
c. If a previous application was approved, when was the waiver in effect? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note: If the waiver application is approved, the Division of Occupational Safety may attach conditions to the granting of the waiver if deemed necessary.**

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Office Use Only**

CMS # \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

New Application / Renewal  
Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Granted / Denied Date \_\_\_\_\_