

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Wage and Hour Division  
Washington

FIRST HOSIERY LEARNERS CERTIFICATES ISSUED

The first special certificates for the employment of learners in the hosiery industry were issued today to 19 employers in various parts of the East by the Wage and Hour Division of the U. S. Department of Labor. The certificates become effective September 18, 1939, on which day the first wage order issued by Administrator Elmer F. Andrews, setting minimum wage rates of  $32\frac{1}{2}$  cents an hour for seamless hosiery manufacture and 40 cents an hour for full-fashioned hosiery manufacture, goes into effect.

The American Federation of Hosiery Workers "was in substantial agreement" with the employers in the hosiery industry at the hearings which Merle D. Vincent, Chief of the Division's Hearings and Exemptions Section, conducted on the need for learners certificates and the scope of the exemption in the hosiery industry on the basis of the rates to go into effect on September 18.

The certificates include provision for the employment of learners at lower than the minima set in the wage order, for learning periods of 12 weeks or 480 hours for some operations, and 24 weeks or 960 hours for others. During the second half of the 24-week training period, higher wages must be paid than during the primary learning period, on the basis of Mr. Vincent's determination.

In the seamless hosiery industry, primary learning period rates must be not less than  $22\frac{1}{2}$  cents an hour. For the secondary learning period--allowed only for training persons engaged in looping and certain knitting operations--the rate must be not less than  $27\frac{1}{2}$  cents an hour if workers are paid on a piece-rate basis, or 29 cents on an hourly rate basis. In the full-fashioned industry, the wages

paid for the primary learning period of 12 weeks or 480 hours, must be not less than 25 cents an hour; and for the secondary learning period in knitting, looping, seaming and topping operations, workers must receive not less than 30 cents an hour on a piece-rate basis or 35 cents on an hourly rate basis.

The number of learners to be employed under each certificate is not specified in the notice of issuance (Federal Register September 7, 1939), but the terms include provision that the number of learners shall be limited to five per cent of the total number of factory workers (not including office or sales personnel), except that learners are limited to five in number instead of five per cent in plants employing less than 100 workers, because of the special problems of smaller firms. Eight such permits are included in the list announced today, while a ninth mill received approval to employ four learners.

Certificates included in this first list cover plants in the states of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia and Wisconsin. The permits remain in force for one year from September 18, 1939, to September 18, 1940. The list made public today covered only those first acted upon. Many other firms' applications will be acted upon within the next few days.

—###—