

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION  
Washington, D. C.

REGULATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF LEARNERS IN THE HOSIERY INDUSTRY

Amended regulations whereby learners may be employed in the hosiery industry at minimum hourly wages ranging from 22-1/2 to 35 cents per hour were announced today by Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U. S. Department of Labor. (Federal Register, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 1940 -- Regulations Part 522 -- Sections 522.020 to 522.031) The Regulations are effective immediately.

The minimum wage rates for regular workers (non-learners) in the hosiery industry are fixed by Wage Order, effective August 18, 1939, at 32-1/2 cents per hour in the seamless and 40 cents in the full-fashioned branches of the industry.

Conditions under which Special Certificates for the employment of learners at sub-minimum wages may be issued to plants in the Hosiery Industry include the following:

That experienced workers are not available; that the issuance of a Special Certificate will create no unfair competitive labor cost advantage, and will not impair or depress working standards established for experienced workers for work of a like or comparable character in the industry.

Generally, Special Certificates shall not authorize the employment of learners in excess of 5 percent of the total number of factory workers. However, for "new mills" and "expanding mills" Special Certificates may be issued for a larger number of learners. Also, the employment of learners "to the extent of expanding production needs" may be authorized for plants operating on Government contract production required by the National Defense Program.

The period for which learners may be employed is not to exceed 480 hours in "Class I" occupations (listed below) and 960 hours in "Class II" occupations.

If experienced operators are paid on a piece work rate, learners shall be paid at least the same piece work rate as that paid workers already employed on similar work in the establishment, and learners shall receive their full piece work earnings whenever these exceed the applicable minimum hourly wage.

It is required that employers exercise due diligence in efforts to secure experienced workers before employing inexperienced workers at learners rates.

Certificates, which may be cancelled for cause, shall be posted in each plant where learners are employed at subminimum wages.

For definition purposes, the Regulation makes the following occupational classifications:

Class I Occupations -- Seamless Branch: Knitting (except transfer top knitting); Seaming; Topping; Boarding; Pairing; Folding; Examining and Inspecting; Mending. Full-fashioned Branch: Boarding; Pairing; Folding, Examining and Inspecting; Mending.

Class II Occupations -- Seamless Branch: Knitting (transfer top knitting only); Looping. Full-fashioned Branch: Knitting; Looping; Seaming; Topping.

The minimum hourly wage for learners in Class I occupations is 22-1/2 cents in the seamless and 25 cents in the full-fashioned branches. A learner may not work more than 480 hours at learner's rates in Class I occupations.

In Class II occupations learners may work for 960 hours at wages ranging from 22-1/2 to 29 cents per hour in the seamless branch, and from 25 to 35 cents per hour in the full-fashioned branch.

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