

Cafe and restaurant industry

Young workers

There are a lot of young workers in the cafe and restaurant industry. Specific factors to consider in relation to young workers include:

- physical characteristics (manual handling poses a problem as their muscle strength can still be developing)
- general behaviour and maturity
- vulnerability to workplace harassment
- limited work experience and training
- lack of confidence to raise issues with their employer or supervisor
- may have limited ability to see risks and to make appropriate decisions about their safety and the safety of others around them
- may have limited ability to cope with unexpected or stressful situations (eg aggression from customers)
- may have competing priorities of work, study and social life leading to fatigue.

Possible solutions

These solutions are in addition to the solutions you use for your other workers.

- Train young workers about how to complete all tasks safely (induction training when they start as well as ongoing training)
- Buddy young workers up with experienced workers so skills, knowledge and experience can be passed onto them
- Closely supervise young workers until they can demonstrate that they can work safely
- Make sure young workers know how to report unsafe conditions and that they feel comfortable doing this
- Have a policy that is enforced, stating that you have zero tolerance of harassment, skylarking, intimidation, offensive language and behaviour, initiations, practical jokes, etc
- Ensure there is responsible mature supervision of young workers at all times
- Provide appropriate rostering which allows for sufficient rest between and during shifts.

For more information on workplace health and safety issues visit www.dir.qld.gov.au

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