

Working **Y**outh

age 14 - 18

Do you do cleaning work in hotels?

You may be setting tables, serving customers, chopping food, cooking, washing dishes or cleaning up. This can be good and decent work, but there are always things that can hurt you or make you sick. Your employer is responsible for providing a safe workplace, but it is wise for you to know the dangers and what to do about them.

The top 3 dangers for youth



- **Danger of sexual advances or improper requests from hotel guests**



- **Lifting things which are too heavy for you**



- **Using harsh cleaning agents without knowing the safety concerns**

HOTEL CLEANING

What YOU should do to stay safe on the job

Know the law

The rule is: No one under 18 should do hazardous work!
(*Insert country name*) has a law to protect young workers.
The law says:

(insert key points from the law that address: age, hours, tasks that are off limits)

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Get trained

Your boss or supervisor must train you to do every task that's part of your job, such as how to handle any chemicals you need to use, how to lift heavy things, or how to use cutting tools or equipment safely, and show you what might be harmful. Your boss should also teach you what to do if there is a robbery, crime, or abuse from a customer. Do not be shy if you are not sure how to do something—ask!

Be careful; be proud

You have a job. You are helping your family. You deserve respect from clients and co-workers. If something seems unsafe, ask about it. If someone bothers or threatens you, ask for help. Keep your eyes open for dangers.

Remember, it is your employer's responsibility to provide a safe workplace. It is **your** responsibility to follow instructions and safety rules carefully.

What YOUR EMPLOYER should do so you are safe

- Have the vacuum cleaner, iron, and other materials in good repair
- Have a rule against violence and harassment of any kind and enforce it
- Give you any rubber gloves and any other protective gear you need
- Have a first aid kit and an emergency plan in case you are hurt

TRUE STORIES

"It was my second week on the job. I slipped on the wet floor and fell right on my tailbone. I couldn't walk for two weeks, and couldn't play soccer the rest of the season."

"I was chopping up vegetables. Nobody showed me how to do it quickly without getting hurt, and the boss kept shouting at me. I cut my finger badly and couldn't work for three days."

"The customers are always yelling at me. One time a customer pushed me so hard I fell down. It makes me scared, and I go home with headaches every day."

Some other dangers and what to do about them

STRAIN

- Get help when lifting heavy items, such as turning the mattress or tucking sheets under
- Remember "SLIM" (Safe Lifting Methods)

Squat to pick up the object and lift using your leg muscles not your back

Lean close, keeping the heavy item against your body

Move your feet to turn, do not twist your body

- Use a cart to move linen, laundry, or other heavy items. Push rather than pull carts
- Take regular rest breaks, even just short breaks to stretch your body; take turns with other workers to do different types of tasks
- Pad your knees (with a mat or towel) and change your position often when you work on your knees
- Clean up spills immediately
- Do not carry items too tall for you to see over.

FALLS

- Use a ladder or footstool to reach areas up high. Never stand on the edge of a bathtub, bed or chair.

CHEMICALS

Cleaning products for toilets and floors are often harsh and can hurt you. To protect yourself,

- Read the labels on the cleaning products you use. Make sure you understand if

any are dangerous and what you should do if you get them on your skin or in your eyes. If unsure, or not labeled, ask! If the chemical is hazardous, wear gloves (provided by your employer). Do not mix chemicals together.

STRESS

- If someone shouts at or threatens you, call a co-worker or supervisor
- If someone tries to sexually harass you, tell your boss, and get help from a trusted friend or community organization outside the workplace
- Do not work alone in a hotel room if hotel guests are present.

DISEASE

You can get colds and stomach problems from hotel guests by handling articles that they have used (drinking glasses, kleenex, bed sheets). To protect yourself,

- wash your hands often with soap, especially after handling soiled linen or cleaning the bathroom

You can also get HIV and other blood-related diseases. To protect yourself,

- be very careful when you handle trash cans or bags; watch out for syringes, razor blades, and if you can, wear gloves.

ELECTRIC SHOCK

- Do not touch or plug in electrical equipment when your hands are wet.
- Let someone know if any of the equipment has a frayed cord or is broken. Do not use it until it is fixed.

If you need help or more information, contact:

Name and address of distributing agency here