

**RCW 49.12.490 Minor work hour rules—College and career and technical education program enrollees. (Effective July 1, 2026.)** (1)

The rules adopted under this chapter must allow a sixteen- or seventeen-year old minor to work the same number of hours and days during the school year as would be permitted during school vacations or holidays if:

- (a) The minor is enrolled in a bona fide college program; or
- (b) The minor is enrolled in a career and technical education program and the work is performed for an employer approved by the program.

(2) For purposes of this section, "career and technical education program" refers to a work-based learning program approved by the office of the superintendent of public instruction or the minor's school district, including but not limited to core plus programs. [2025 c 79 s 2.]

**Finding—Intent—2025 c 79:** "(1) The legislature finds that the department of labor and industries has adopted rules outlining the number of hours sixteen- and seventeen-year olds may work during school and nonschool weeks. These rules currently allow students participating in a bona fide college program, such as running start, to work the same number of hours for any employer(s) during the school weeks as allowed during nonschool weeks; however, a student participating in a career and technical education program is not provided the same opportunity to work more hours, including for employers who are approved by the career and technical education program. Many students enrolled in career and technical education programs are focused on gaining more on-the-job experience to help propel them in their future careers, and want to spend more hours working for an employer tied with their career and technical education program. For example, a student may attend traditional high school classes in the morning until lunch and then participate in work-based learning at an approved employer jobsite for the remainder of the school day with opportunity to work more than four hours per day.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to direct the department of labor and industries to revise the current rules outlining the hours sixteen- and seventeen-year olds may work during school weeks, so that students enrolled in a bona fide college program and a career and technical education program are treated equitably and both are allowed to work the same number of hours during school weeks as permitted during nonschool weeks." [2025 c 79 s 1.]

**Effective date—2025 c 79:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2026." [2025 c 79 s 3.]