



Work-Based Learning: Myth vs. Fact

Myth: Minors are prohibited from working in industry.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Work-Based Learning (WBL) is demonstrated by a full continuum of experiences progressing in quality and intensity that is accessible to every student throughout their program of study. To prepare a dynamic workforce for the future of Michigan, students need to be exposed to as many career options as early as possible. CTE students refine their career goals through coursework consistent with their career interest area, contextual learning, and career preparation while meeting academic and technical standards.

Fact: Students who are currently enrolled in Michigan's state-approved CTE programs can perform skilled jobs that average teenagers are not prepared to complete.



CTE students must have completed occupational and safety training and possess the skills necessary to work in technical trades through WBL connected to/facilitated by their CTE program. Minors may legally work in Michigan at the age of 14 or 15, see Public Act 90 of 1978 and visit [Labor and Economic Opportunity - Youth Employment Standards Act \(YESA\)](#) for more information.

Fact: Students who are currently enrolled in a Michigan state-approved CTE program have listed exemptions.

With the required safety inspection and regular visits students have flexibility to work in some situations. A full [list of those exceptions](#) for these minors can be found online.

Myth: The industry/workplace is too dangerous for minors.





Myth: Employer insurance providers won't allow minor hires.

Fact: Many employers across the state hire minors to perform regular daily activities including hazardous exempt activities by state-approved CTE students.

One of the requirements before students are approved to work for those employers in a work-based learning experience is proof of valid liability and workman's compensation insurance.

Myth: Human Resources won't allow employers to hire minors under age 18 due to liability.



Fact: Company policy may be the only barrier to engaging with qualified students.

Local CTE program instructors or WBL coordinators ensure quality and safe work experiences for students that help employers build a talent pipeline. CTE WBL students must:

- Pass rigorous training and demonstration of safe practices.
- Complete at least half of the CTE program prior to engaging in WBL career training placements.
- Demonstrate soft skills and career ready practices that signal an appropriate level of maturity before placement.
- Collaborate with teachers, administrators, and guardians to ensure access to work-based learning without barriers and appropriate placement.
- Communicate regularly with teachers and WBL coordinators throughout the placement to continue to receive instruction, coaching and support.

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