Labour Inspectors

Light work and hazardous work list pocket guide

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Purpose of the light work and hazardous work list pocket

1. Quick reference to the Light Work List and Hazardous Work List
2. On the job material to support identification and investigation of potential child labour cases
3. Support community outreach

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# CHAPTER 1: Defining Child Labour and Child Work

**Child Labour:** work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, dignity, and which is harmful to their physical and mental development.

* Child: a person under 18 years of age
* Any illegal or prohibited work that children perform. This can range from working longer hours than permitted by law to engaging in the worst forms of child labour (slavery, debt bondage, illicit activities, etc...)

**\*\***To identify child labour, inspectors must consider (1) child’s age, (2) work task (3) working hours and times, and (4) if work affects their school attendance and performance.

**Child Work:** legally acceptable work that does not negatively impact the education (if under 15 years of age), or physical, mental, emotional, or social development of the child.

* Children 15 and older can work full time
* Chores: Household tasks within a child’s own home (caring for family, cleaning, cooking, laundry) without harming their education or development

CHAPTER 2: Hazardous Work List

## Hazardous Work

Work that is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of a child.

* Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse
* Work underground, underwater, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces
* Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling of transport of heavy loads
* Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health or
* Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night, or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer (Decent Work Act, Sect. 21).

## Hazardous Work List

The Hazardous Work List is an attachment to the Decent Work Act which bans children (under age 18) from dangerous tasks. If a child under 18 performs these tasks, it’s child labor and illegal. Exceptions exist for children, 16–17-years old on certain tasks when proper training, supervision, and safety equipment is in place.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sector** | **Task** | **Mitigations for 16–17-year-olds** |
| Agriculture | Bush clearing | Yes |
| Harvesting cocoa | Yes |
| Palm cutting | No |
| Rubber tapping | No |
| Sugar cane milling | Yes |
| Blacksmithing | Use of fire, sharp tools, and machinery | Yes |
| Cattle Rearing | Feeding animals; Providing animal protection; Working in field for long hours | Yes |
| Coal Burning | Hauling and cutting logs; Burning logs and coal | No |
| Construction | Laying bricks, pouring water; Handling construction materials (planks, working tools) | Yes |
| Domestic Work | Painting homes; Roofing and repairing using sharp tools; Using insecticide; Cutting grass; Fetching water and wood | Yes |
| Fishing | Underwater work; Paddling canoes; Hauling nets | No |
| Gambling and Entertainment Centers | Drug dealing and trafficking; Promoting sex workers | No |
| Garbage Collection | Working in contaminated environments | No |
| Hunting | Setting traps; Using firearms | No |
| Manufacturing | Mixing chemicals, operating heavy machinery, packaging products | Yes |
| Mining and Quarrying | Drilling; Sand, diamond, and gold mining; Washing gravel; Rock crushing | No |
| Shoe Shining for Commercial Purposes | Using chemicals | Yes |
| Soap Making | Use of chemicals, heat, and fire | Yes |
| Street Selling | Moving between vehicles to sell | No |
| Transportation | Driving vehicles; Serving as conductor/carboy | No |
| Woodwork Related Activities | Carpentry, fixing furniture; Use of sharp objects, chemicals, sharp objects | Yes |

Examples of hazardous work:

* Teta is 15 years old. She works at a textile factory using large machinery to make sweaters. She has been injured twice and has not received medical attention.
* Jeremiah is 14 and crushes rocks on the outskirts of the city. He works outside every day from 7am-5pm even when the weather is bad.

# CHAPTER 3: Light Work List

## Light Work

Light work or any other activity can be performed by children at least 13 years of age. The work can only be performed for a maximum of two hours a day and no more than 14 hours a week. Light work requirements:

* Not likely to be harmful to a child’s health or safety, moral or material welfare or development
* Not such as to prejudice the child’s attendance at school or their capacity to benefit from instruction (Decent Work Act Sect. 21).

## Light Work List

The Light Work List an attachment to the Decent Work Act allow children aged 13-14 to do specific tasks considered, ‘child work’, within legal limits and restrictions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sector** | **Task** | **Limit/Restriction** |
| Domestic Work | Washing Clothes | Use regular soap, no strong chemicals |
| Dish Washing | Use regular soap, no strong chemicals |
| Sweeping | Size of yard (time of work), protection from dust |
| Fetching Water | Distance traveledNo heavy weight, deep well/dangerous water |
| Washing Floors | Cannot use strong chemicals |
| Cooking | Not permitted outside of the home, must be supervised by parent or guardian |
| Babysitting at home |  |
| Fetching wood | Distance traveledWeight carried |
| Agriculture | Weeding | Check for snakes |
| Harvesting Vegetables and Fruit | Weight carriedCheck for snakes |
| Preparing Seedlings and Planting | Size of field, check for snakes |
| Backyard Garden | Cannot use dangerous tools, check for snakes |
| Watering Flowers | Check for snakes,Weight of Water carried |
| Trimming of Flowers | Cannot use dangerous tools, check for snakes |
| Watering Crops | Weight carried |
| Bagging Palm Nuts | Weight carriedDistance traveled |
| Carrying Tools | Weight carriedDistance traveled |
| Community Service | Cleaning around community during weekends or vacation | Must use protective gear including gloves and boots, must be protected from dust |
| Cleaning campus, church, mosque | Must use protective gear including gloves and boots, must be protected from dust |
| Distribution of citations | Distance traveled |
| Selling/Petty Trade | Selling in Family Shop | Approved products (no alcohol, cigarettes), not moving in the street |
| Selling in Petty Trade Stand | Approved products (no alcohol, cigarettes), not moving in the street |
| Stock taking | Weight carriedApproved products (no alcohol, cigarettes) |
| Sorting of Items | Weight carriedApproved products (no alcohol, cigarettes) |
| Dusting/cleaning items | Weight carriedApproved products (no alcohol, cigarettes) |
| Plaiting/braiding hair | Cannot use hot or sharp tools |
| Cadet Work | Photocopying | Machine must be in good working order |
| Delivering documents | Distance traveled, weight carried |
| Office attendance |  |

Examples of Light Work:

* Sarah is 13 years old and works at her family shop two hours a day for 5 days a week after school. She helps take stock of the store.
* David is 14 years old and works two hours per day on Saturday and Sunday in the afternoon. He helps sweep the floors of the community center.

# Chapter 4: Identifying Child Labour

## Common Forms of Child Labour in Liberia

Child labour most often occurs in the agricultural sector:

* Small scale rubber plantations
* Production of charcoal, cocoa, coffee, casava, sugarcane, and other substances
* Familial fishing and aquaculture work

Child labour in the services and industry sectors:

* Domestic work and street work - vending and begging
* Mining diamonds and gold, cutting and crushing stone, brick production, and construction

   

##

## Indicators of Child Labour

When identifying potential situations of child labour, all labour inspectors should consider the following indicators to help determine what type of labour or work it is and what evidence they would need to obtain:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age**  | * How old is the child?
* Is this age permissible under the law?
 |
| **Hours** **and Time of Day** | * How many hours per day and per week is the child working?
* What time of day is the child working?
* Do these hours conflict with the law?
 |
| **Type of Work**  | * What task(s) is the child responsible for?
* Is the task(s) permitted by law?
 |
| **Supervision, Training, and Safety Equipment** | * Is the child receiving the necessary safety protocols when engaging in a task?
 |

## Distinguishing Child Labour from Human Trafficking and Forced Labour

Child labour is multifaceted and includes various types of work. Identifying potential cases is crucial to prevent the worst forms of child labor, such as child trafficking. It is important to provide victims with the necessary protections and services during referrals.

# CHAPTER 5: PROCESSING A CRIME SCENE

## Evidence Collection

Evidence of hazardous work can include:

* Testimony from relevant sources
* Work in dangerous conditions (underground, under water, at dangerous heights, confined spaces)
* Employment contracts, emails, and scheduling indicating work with dangerous machinery, heavy loads, hazardous substances, extreme temperatures, noise, or vibrations
* Difficult working conditions (long hours, night shift, confinement)
* Incidents of physical, mental, or sexual abuse (forensic interviewing and rape kit)

Evidence used to show a light work violation has occurred based on age:

* Birth certificate
* Government issued ID
* Testimony from relevant sources
* Medical examination to establish age

Evidence used to show work has harmed the child’s health, development, or school attendance (light work):

* School attendance sheets
* Payments or employment records at workplace
* Testimony from relevant sources
* Documents indicating work was during school hours or the child was working excessively long hours before/after school

Evidence to show child’s task, hours, and conditions of work:

* Workplace documents: pay stubs, roster of employees, financial records, employment contract, assigned tasks, and reprimand from employer
* Online recruitment sources
* Testimony from relevant sources

## Best Practices for Interviewing Children:

* Ensure comfort and basic needs
* Offer a safe location
* Consider gender preferences for interviewers
* Keep interview informal (clothing and seating arrangements)
* Employ trained personnel only
* Ensure there is a victim advocate or social worker present
* Limit interview duration and scope

## Additional Tips for Interviewing:

* Tailor questions to age and capacity
* Use open-ended questions
* Ask one question at a time
* Reduce the authority in the room by conducting interviews outside the presence of supervisors to increase the child’s comfort level
* Avoid conducting interviews in the presence of the child’s family, relative, guardian, and/or friend(s)
* Prioritize child’s security and use a trauma-informed approach and questions
* Explain the interview’s purpose
* Close by reassuring the child and offering ongoing support
* Ensure the child is not left alone

## Sample Interview Questions:

* Tell me about how you started working here.
* Tell me about a typical day at the factory?
* Who do you speak with at work?
* How often do you attend school?
* What types of tasks do you carry out at work?
* What kinds of safety equipment do you use?
* Can you tell me about a time when you or another employee could not finish a task?
* How often are you paid? How much are you paid?
* How many hours do you work in a day?

# CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Importance of Community Outreach

* Break down misunderstandings and promote a better understanding of child labour
* Leads to early detection and promote a better understanding of child labour and reporting methods to enable community members to identify and report potential cases
* Encourages communities to act and report which plays an important role in **prevention**

## Best Practices for Community Outreach

Breaking down child labour myths takes time. When discussing child labour, avoid making people feel guilty or discouraged about past misunderstandings. Empower them with knowledge instead.

For effective community outreach:

* Engage in safe spaces
* Acknowledge and listen to existing beliefs about child labour from
* Be inclusive in your discussions within the community
* Simplify information
* Conduct follow-ups

## Key Messages for the Community

* *Child labour* is mentally or physically dangerous or harmful to children. *Child work* – chores, after-school jobs, or babysitting – is legal and can be beneficial.
* Victims of child labour can be **working in** **our** **communities**, including homes. Child labour does not just occur in sweatshops and factories.
* Children of ages 13-14 can perform light work tasks as long as the work does not impact their ability to attend school and the child does not work more than two hours per day and 14 hours per week.
* Children 15 and older can work full-time.
* *Child labour often makes extreme poverty worse*because if children do not attend school, it is extremely difficult to obtain the skills and knowledge required to secure better paying employment.
* Working in hazardous conditions can be physically or mentally detrimental to a child, impacting their future ability to work.
* Often survivors of child labor do not have control over when they can stop working. Even when they have earned some income, it is often not enough money for future educational expenses. Additionally, trauma, family economic dependency and stress factors can make it difficult for a survivor of child labour to return to school.
* *Child labour is not something that can be solved overnight, but instead requires consistent community outreach and education*