Seasonal Stats & Facts



DID YOU KNOW?

Seasonal Employment

For many retailers, the holiday shopping season is a “make or break” period which can define their bottom lines for the entire year. Temporary and part-time employment spikes as retailers and other businesses increase staffing to accommodate their seasonal increase in business. Workers not familiar with this sort of employment, and employers unaccustomed to hiring part-time and/or seasonal employees, may not be fully aware of the regulations surrounding such employment. We offer the following information to help guide both employers and employees through this busy season in an informed manner.

The mission of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is to promote and to achieve compliance with labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation’s workforce. To that end, WHD is responsible for enforcing some of the nation’s most comprehensive federal labor laws on topics including the minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor.

Collectively, the laws enforced by Wage and Hour cover most private, state and local government employment throughout the United States and its territories, and protect over 135 million workers in more than 7.3 million establishments nationwide.

Temporary workers who became injured were younger and had less time in their jobs, sometimes less than a year, than permanent workers. Temporary workers had higher injury rates but lower lost-time and medical costs. Injured temporary workers also were more likely to be male.

NIOSH researchers analyzed over 1.3 million workers’ compensation claims in Ohio from 2001–2013, including 45,046 claims from workers employed by temporary service agencies, to compare the injury risk for temporary and permanent workers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that there were more than 2.8 million temporary employees in the United States. As temporary-employee numbers have increased, so too have the number of injuries and deaths to those employees.

Many students experience an increase both in their free time and their need for extra cash around the holidays. As many retailers have an increased need for seasonal / part-time help at that same time, many employers will fill their seasonal and/or part-time positions with young workers. It is often a good fit for both parties.

WHD is committed to helping young workers find those positive and early employment experiences that can be so important to their development, but the work must be safe. The youth employment provisions of the FLSA were enacted to ensure that when young people work, the work does not jeopardize their health, well-being, or educational opportunities.

Temporary employment includes wage and salary workers whose job has a pre-determined termination date. National definitions broadly conform to this generic definition, but may vary depending on national circumstances. This indicator is broken down by age group and it is measured as percentage of dependent employees (i.e. wage and salary workers).

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Part Time Employment in the United States averaged 21026.01 Thousand from 1968 until 2020, reaching an all time high of 28134 Thousand in July of 2013 and a record low of 10086 Thousand in January of 1968. This page provides – United States Part Time Employment- actual values, historical data, forecast, chart, statistics, economic calendar and news. United States Part Time Employment – values, historical data and charts – was last updated on October of 2020.

Research shows that over 40% of temporary workers reported never receiving safety training from either their temporary agency or host employer compared to 25% of permanent workers. In addition, only 42.7% of temporary workers were screened for job experience by their host employers.

These studies also indicate that it may be helpful to increase safety focus when temporary workers are placed in high-risk industries such as construction, manufacturing, and agriculture. BLS data indicates that temporary workers are especially likely to work in manufacturing, with 32.2% of temporary agency workers reporting employment in manufacturing compared to 11.1% of workers with traditional employment arrangements. These recent WC studies indicate that certain job class codes are especially high risk and these could serve as triggers for an additional onsite safety review of the host employer worksite by the temporary agency.

Differences in machine operations, vehicle operations and construction were most notable. The presenter also described a survey of injured workers, conducted as an innovative method of occupational health and safety surveillance of the temporary help supply industry. Temporary workers were more likely to rate their job as less hazardous than permanent employees in similar industries, possibly indicating a lower ability to accurately assess hazards. Temporary workers were less likely to have had pre-assignment screening, safety training, or safety equipment. About 28% of temporary workers interviewed had experienced a significant change of job assignment upon arrival at the job site. No significant differences were found for physical/mental exhaustion, current health, frequency of overtime and knowledge about the workers’ compensation system.