

Your Rights Under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act

What information should I receive from my employer?



If you're recruited to do seasonal agricultural work away from your home, the employer or labor contractor must give you a **written notice** when you're recruited which tells you:

1. Where you'll work;
2. Your wage rate;
3. The work that you'll do, including the crop that you'll pick;
4. How long the job will last;
5. Whether housing, transportation or other benefits are offered, and how much they will cost;
6. Whether your employer or crew leader will receive a commission or other benefit from selling you goods they sell you, like food, clothing or tools;
7. Whether you're going to be working where there's a strike or work stoppage.

If you're a **local** agricultural worker, you also have the right to receive this written notice, but **you must ask for it**. Federal law requires your employer to provide this information in your native language (for example, Spanish).

The employer isn't allowed to discriminate against workers who request this information. If you don't receive this information, ask for it. If you still don't get it, contact the **Northwest Justice Project Farm Worker Unit** or **Columbia Legal Services**. (See below for contact information.)

What information should my employer provide me about wages?



Employers of farm workers must provide workers with a written wage statement, typically a paycheck "**stub**," each time workers are paid. **Keep all of your wage statements or other pay records**. Your wage statement, or paycheck "**stub**", must include:

1. **How much** you earned;
2. How many **hours** you worked;
3. Whether you were paid by the **hour** or at a "**piece rate**" (by the box, bushel, pound, carton, bin);
4. If you were paid by piece rate, **how much you picked, thinned, pruned, etc.**;
5. If money was taken out of your pay, like income taxes, social security taxes or cash advances you received, the written statement must tell **you how much was taken out and why**;
6. The **employer's name, address and telephone number**.

Any **deductions** from your wages must be listed and explained on your wage statement. Deductions for Social Security and taxes are legally permitted. Sometimes employers take deductions for housing, transportation, tools and other items. If these deductions reduce your wages below the minimum wage, the deductions may be illegal. Also, an employer can't deduct payments for loans, housing, transportation or food without your permission.

What are the laws about transportation?

If you're **transported** to your job **by the employer** or by the person who recruited you, the vehicle used to transport you must be safe, be insured, and it must meet federal and state government standards.

What are the laws about housing conditions?

Farm Worker **housing or camps** provided by an employer must meet standards set by state and federal law. Labor camps must be inspected and certified before workers move

in. Inspection certificates should be posted where you can read them.

If you're housed in dirty, dangerous or inadequate camps by an employer, call:

The Northwest Justice Project Farm Worker Unit:

1-888-201-1018 (Yakima)

1-888-201-1021 (Wenatchee)

Columbia Legal Services:

1-800-631-1323 (Yakima)

1-800-572-9615 (Wenatchee)

1-888-201-9735 (Kennewick)

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