

Your Rights under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act

What information should my employer give me?

If an employer or labor contractor recruits you to do seasonal agricultural work away from your home, the employer/ contractor must give you a **written notice** when they recruit you. The notice must say:

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

If you are a **local** agricultural worker, you have the right to this written notice only if **you ask for it**. Under federal law, your employer must give this information in your native language (for example, Spanish).

The employer may not discriminate against you for asking for this information. If you do not get this information, ask for it. If you still do not get it, contact the **Northwest Justice Project Farm Worker Unit** or **Columbia Legal Services**. (See below for contact information.)

What information about wages must my employer give me?

Employers of farm workers must give you a written wage statement, usually a paycheck "**stub**," each time they pay you. **Keep all your wage statements or other pay records.** Your wage statement, or paycheck "**stub**," must say:

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

Your wage statement must list and explain any **deductions** from your wages. The law allows deductions for Social Security and taxes. Sometimes employers take deductions for housing, transportation, tools and other items. If these deductions lower your wages below the minimum wage, the deductions may be illegal. An employer can only make deductions for loans, housing, transportation or food with your permission.

What are the laws about transportation?

If your employer or the person who recruited you **transports** you to your job, the vehicle they use must be safe and 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 you move in.

Inspection certificates should be posted where you can read them.

If an employer houses you in dirty, dangerous or inadequate camps, 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)

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

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