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Wage and Hour Division (WHD)

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Press Releases

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Wage and Hour Division
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US Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division focusing on low-wage workers at assisted living and group homes in Alabama and Mississippi

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division has launched an initiative focusing on enforcement of the Fair Labor Standards Act for workers of Alabama and Mississippi assisted living and group home environments.

"Our enforcement database shows that low-wage workers in the assisted living and group home industry are particularly vulnerable to wage violations, and this local emphasis program is part of the Labor Department's commitment to ensure that workers are receiving every penny they earn," said Kenneth Stripling, the Wage and Hour Division's district director in Birmingham. "In addition, we want to ensure that young workers are not jeopardizing their health, well-being or educational opportunities."

The initiative will feature visits to local assisted living and/or group home establishments over the next three months to ensure compliance with minimum wage, overtime and child labor provisions of the FLSA. Division staff also will review pay practices for related occupations typically filled by some of the most vulnerable workers who may be subject to wage violations, including certified nursing assistants, licensed practical nurses, janitors, cooks and other low-wage hourly workers. Employers found to be violating minimum wage and overtime rules will be required to pay back wages. Violators may also be subject to monetary penalties.

The FLSA requires that covered employees be paid at least the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 for all hours worked and time and one-half their regular rates of pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

The law also prohibits the employment of people under the age of 18 years in any nonagricultural occupations that the Labor Department has declared to be hazardous. Minors may not work more than three hours on school days, eight hours on nonschool days, 18 hours in school weeks or 40 hours during nonschool weeks. The regulations detail that 14- and 15-year-olds may work during non-school hours, but no later than 7 p.m., or 9 p.m. from June 1 until Labor Day.

For more information about the FLSA and youth employment, contact the Wage and Hour Division's office in Birmingham at 205-731-1305, or call the division's toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (487-9243). Information is also available at <http://www.dol.gov/whd>.

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