



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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City Attorney's Office and CA Labor Commissioner issue warning about scams offering employment to minors

San Diego, CA: As schools begin to close down for the summer break and children are eager to earn some spending money, the San Diego City Attorney's Office and the California Labor Commissioner warn parents and the public about companies or individuals that are soliciting children to work in violation of child labor laws. Profit-making scam artists are those that disregard the laws for employing minors for door-to-door or home solicitation sales. They exploit children to sell candy, flowers or other merchandise for a profit. Crew leaders often recruit prospects around schools. Children as young as 12, have been picked up by vans and dropped off unsupervised in unfamiliar neighborhoods or malls, and left on their own for hours.

The California Labor Commissioner regulates employers and investigates violations of the Labor Code provisions regulating the employment of minors, under the age of 18. It is against the law for minors to work in unsafe or dangerous conditions; to have unregulated hours; or to receive less than minimum wage. Employers must provide workers' compensation insurance and keep on file a valid work permit. When children show up knocking at your door selling candy, cookies or magazine subscriptions, they may not be with a legitimate group or program and the child at your door could be in danger or being taken advantage of.

"Safe working conditions for children are regulated for good reasons," said City Attorney Jan Goldsmith. "Parents should be alert."

"The welfare of children is of utmost importance and child labor laws are strict for a reason," said California Labor Commissioner Julie Su. "This isn't to say that kids cannot sell Girl Scout cookies, but when children are used to sell items that bring profit to a business and work at the entity's control and direction, they are entitled to the protections of the labor laws."

If you are solicited by children at your door or in a public place, ask the children if there is an adult supervising them, the organization they work for, and how much money they make off of the sale. If you have a concern about a group selling door-to-door in your neighborhood, the City Attorney's Office encourages you to contact the San Diego Police Department's 24 hour non-emergency phone number at 619/531-2000.

(MORE)

The Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, also known as the California Labor Commissioner's office, will also take complaints of possible violations at 619/767-2032. The City Attorney's [Consumer & Environmental Protection Unit](#) prosecutes violations of child labor laws.

The Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) protects employees' rights in the workplace while preserving a level playing field for employers who comply with the Labor Code by adjudicating wage claims, investigating discrimination and public works complaints, and enforcing state labor law and Industrial Welfare Commission wage orders. To learn more about the functions of the California Labor Commissioner, visit its Web site at www.dir.ca.gov/dlse. Employees that have work-related questions or complaints can call the California Workers' Information Hotline at 1-866-924-9757.

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