Almost every adult will need to work to earn a living. For a job, you need education, skills, and training according to your interests and talents and the jobs that are available.

There are laws to protect you in your job. This unit tells you your legal rights to keep your job against unfair firing and discrimination.
Vocabulary

**Benefit** - something that helps a person. *Medical Insurance is a benefit of some jobs.*

**Contract** - an agreement between people. Each side receives some benefit, and agrees to certain terms or facts. *I have signed a contract to buy a washing machine.*

**Deduct** - to subtract/to take something away from the total. *Your employer will deduct a certain amount from your paycheck for the taxes you owe.*

**Deduction** - what you take away. *My employer pays half of my deduction for health insurance.*

**Discriminate** - to deny a person's legal rights or to treat a person or people in a different way for unfair reasons. *The sales manager discriminates against older people. He won't hire anyone over 45 years old.*

**Discrimination** - a difference in treatment or attitude toward a person or group of people for reasons such as race, color, or religion. *It would be discrimination if a State does not give equal protection of the law to all citizens.*

**Eligible** - having the qualities needed for something, like a job/meeting the legal requirements for something. *Sometimes you have to be a certain age to be eligible for some jobs.*
Employment - the work a person does. An employment agency is a business that helps people find jobs.

Harassment - to bother again and again. There are laws against harassment in the business world.

Illegal - not legal/against the rules or laws. The City ordinances may make it illegal to have farm animals in your yard if you live within the city limits.

Marital status - a legal term that tells if you are married, single, divorced, or widowed. My husband died. My marital status is widow.

Offensive - (1) disagreeable and unpleasant. The conditions in this office are offensive. It is dirty and smells bad. (2) causing anger or unhappiness. His offensive remarks about his friend led to a big fight.

Promotion - a step up to a higher rank, grade, or position. I took a class at night school to qualify for a promotion at the factory.

Repayment - the amount you pay back on a loan or contract. Repayment of my car loan will be made in 48 monthly payments.

Retire - to stop working at your job, office, or business, usually after working a number of years or reaching a certain age. When my father is 65, he will retire from his job at the bus company.

Retirement - the time when people stop working, after a number of years or a certain age, usually 65. Many people on retirement receive a monthly payment of money from Social Security based on the number of years they worked.

Terms - words and requirements that are part of an agreement or a legal document. Please read the terms of your apartment lease carefully.
Unemployed - being out of work/ not having a job. The airline went out of business. Now I am unemployed.

REPEAT WORDS

Certificate - It is important to keep papers of proof, like a marriage certificate, in a safe place.

Document - A document is a written or printed statement that shows official proof of something, like marriage, divorce, ownership of property, or payment of wages.

Federal - Federal laws come from the United States government. These laws apply to every state.

Fee - You have to pay a fee at the County Court House to get a marriage license.

Qualify - If you pass the test, you may qualify to enter the Police Academy.

Employment

You must have a Social Security account number to work. To get it you will need your birth certificate or baptismal certificate. You will apply at the United States Social Security Office. The number is in the blue pages of the telephone book. If the telephone book where you live does not have a blue page government section, look under "Social Security Administration" in the business section of the telephone book.
**Taxes**

The Social Security Administration serves a special purpose in the federal government. One of your rights is to work for pay. One of your responsibilities is to pay taxes. The taxes come from the wages you make when you work. Two of these taxes you must pay are the federal income tax and the FICA (Federal Insurance Contributions Act) called Social Security.

These taxes should be figured for you at the place where you work. The amount you owe needs to be deducted from your paycheck by your employer. Under the Social Security program, your portion of the tax and the same amount given by your employer are sent to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS is the taxing agency of the federal government.

The money is placed in special Social Security funds. Out of these funds, certain benefits are paid. Retirement payments are made to persons who have reached the required retirement age and have quit working. Survivors payments are made to widows, widowers, and children of workers who die. Disability payments are for persons who are too injured and too sick to work. Disabled children are often eligible to receive payments. Social Security taxes also pay a part of Medicare.

A general tax provides Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for persons with disabilities and very low income, persons over 65, and blind or disabled persons. You must be a citizen or legal resident of the United States to receive SSI. Children who are blind or disabled can receive SSI.

In addition to Social Security taxes, you are required by law to pay federal income tax. This tax is also based on your wages.
This tax is also figured by your employer where you work. The amount is deducted just like FICA. Your employer is required by law to give you a record of your wages and the deductions made. This is done once a year. The special form you should ask for from your employer is called a "W-2 form." It will show your deductions for income tax and social security. It can also show Medicare deductions and state and city taxes. You will send the W-2 form and income tax form to the IRS by April 15 every year. Save all of these tax record documents. Keep all papers from your employer about your wages. Keep all papers about other money you get, like interest from a savings account. You may need all these papers for records about your taxes.

**Employment Contracts**

An agreement between you and an employer for you to work for him is a contract. Most work contracts are verbal—that is NOT WRITTEN. You will have a written contract if you go to an employment agency to get a job. Be sure you understand the terms of the contract with the employment agency. Be sure you understand the fees charged for getting a job and the terms of repayment. If you do not understand any part of the contract ask for help.

**Firing**

Most of the time, an employer can fire anyone at any time for any reason. To be fired means the person you work for can tell you you don't have a job there anymore. There are laws that protect you from being fired for unfair reasons. You cannot be fired for these reasons: race, religion, handicap, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, or age. You cannot be fired if you have a written contract with your employer. The terms of the written contract will give the reasons you can be fired. You cannot be fired if you refuse to do something illegal. Your employer cannot force you to break the law. You can be held legally responsible for being a part of illegal activities.
Discrimination is against the law. Federal and state laws protect you from discrimination. Discrimination is when something is done because of race, color, sex, marital status, physical, mental, or sensory handicap, religion, ancestry, national origin, or age, if over 18 for contracts, and over 40 for employment. Once hired, you cannot be treated in a negative or different way from the way others are treated. You cannot be denied a promotion to a higher grade, rank, or position if you can do the work and are qualified. You cannot be refused higher pay.

If you are discriminated against for these reasons, there are agencies to help you. One agency you can complain to is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. You CANNOT be fired from your job if you make a complaint. The EEOC number is in the telephone book.

Sexual harassment is against the law. No one can ask you to have sex in return for special favors at work. No one can offer you a promotion in return for sex. No one can threaten you to have sex to keep your job. At work, you do not have to put up with offensive sexual remarks or touching of your private body parts. Both women and men may be the victims of sexual harassment. Report what is happening to the person in a higher position over the person who is harassing you. Write down the person's name, position, time and place of harassment incidents, and what is said and done. You can also contact EEOC, and the state or local Human Rights Commission about sexual harassment. The numbers for these offices will be in your telephone book.

If you lose your job, you are unemployed. Go to your State Employment Commission for help. You may be eligible for unemployment benefits. This is a sum of money meant to provide some income when you are out of work and looking for another job. You have to follow the rules of the State Employment Office to get this money. If you do not obey the rules, you will have to pay back the money.