



WHEN CAN I?

This sheet is intended to provide **general legal information** about the law in Queensland. It is not legal advice. If you have a particular legal problem you should contact a solicitor for legal advice. At the end is a list of agencies that might be able to assist you, including legal agencies.

AT 10

- you can be charged and taken to court if the police believe you broke the law

AT 11

- you can have a delivery job (if your parents' consent) but you cannot work before 6.00am or after 6.00pm

AT 12

- you must agree before your parents can change and register a different surname

AT 13

- you can get a part-time job if:
 - you do not work during any time you are supposed to be in school (until you turn 16)
 - you work for no more than 4 hours a day on a school day between 6am and 10pm
 - you work no more than 12 hours during Monday to Friday in school semesters

BUT

- outside school days you can work up to 8 hours a day
- on school holidays you can work up to a maximum of 38 hours a week

AT 15

- you can get your own Medicare card
- if you have completed year 10 and have a certificate III or IV you can get a full-time or part-time job (you can get a part-time job before this if it is outside school hours)
- you can get Youth Allowance (if you are regarded as independent)

AT 16

- you can get Youth Allowance (if certain conditions are met)
- you can have sex with another person (including same sex) who is also 16 or older, if they agree, without breaking the law.
- you can get a learner driver permit
- you can enrol to vote but will not be able to vote until you turn 18

AT 17

- you can get a provisional driver licence

AT 18

You are now in control of your life. The law says you are an adult and you don't need your parents' permission to do anything. You can:

- be taken to the adult courts if you break the law
- be sent to an adult jail if a court orders you to be locked up for an offence
- and **MUST** vote (you must enrol to vote within 21 days of turning 18)
- buy alcohol and go to a public bar
- buy cigarettes
- be held responsible for any agreement you make (for example, if you borrow money, rent a flat, sign any contract)
- get married without anyone's permission
- get a tattoo
- make a valid will
- buy a can of spray paint
- change your name without anyone's permission
- have your genitalia including the nipples pierced
- apply for an Australian passport without your parent's consent

At any age

- you can buy condoms
- you can open a bank account providing you can sign your own name
- you can apply for your own Australian passport (if you are under 18, you will need your parents' agreement)
- you can get legal advice
- you can give evidence at court

- you can complain about government departments and their staff (police, teachers, child safety officers) or any other agencies you have contact with
- you can see a doctor and get medical advice and ask to have information about you kept confidential (but this may not happen in certain circumstances particularly if the doctor thinks you are at risk of harm)
- you can smoke cigarettes BUT you will be breaking the law if you give or sell a cigarette to a person under 18
- if there is a court application about you being adopted, and you understand what is being proposed, you must be given information and any other support you need and you can have your say about what is proposed for you and the court must consider your views

Who can help?

Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au General Enquiries **1300 369 711**
Complaints **1300 656 419**

Youth Legal Advice Hotline **1800 527 527**

Youth Advocacy Centre (YAC) www.yac.net.au **3356 1002**

Hub Community Legal www.hubcommunity.org.au **3372 7677**

Logan Youth & Family Legal Service www.yfs.org.au **3826 1500**

Legal Aid Queensland www.legalaid.qld.gov.au **1300 651 188**

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Service www.atsils.org.au **3025 3888 or**
(free call) 1800 012 255 (24hrs 7 days a week)

Translating & Interpreting Services (24hrs) **131 450**

Kids Help Line **1800 551 800**

Refugee and Immigration Legal Service www.rails.org.au **3846 9300**

Community Legal Centres (CLCs) see www.naccl.org.au for your nearest CLC

This information was last reviewed and updated in January 2024. The Youth Advocacy Centre does not accept responsibility for any action or outcome as a result of anyone relying on the information provided.