

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009**

**SESSION LAW 2009-351  
HOUSE BILL 23**

AN ACT AMENDING CHAPTER 95 OF THE GENERAL STATUTES TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN BY INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF CHILD LABOR LAWS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 95-25.23(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Any employer who violates the provisions of G.S. 95-25.5 (Youth Employment) or any regulation issued thereunder, shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed ~~two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00)~~ five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each violation, the first violation and not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each subsequent violation. In determining the amount of such penalty, the appropriateness of such penalty to the size of the business of the person charged and the gravity of the violation shall be considered. The determination by the Commissioner shall be final, unless within 15 days after receipt of notice thereof by certified mail with return receipt, by signature confirmation as provided by the U.S. Postal Service, by a designated delivery service authorized pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 7502(f)(2) with delivery receipt, or via hand delivery, the person charged with the violation takes exception to the determination, in which event final determination of the penalty shall be made in an administrative proceeding pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 150B and in a judicial proceeding pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 150B."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 95-25.15(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Except as otherwise provided in this Article, every employer subject to any provision of this Article shall make, keep, and preserve such records of the persons employed by the ~~employer~~ employer, including the ages of employees, and of the wages, hours, and other conditions and practices of employment which are essential to the enforcement of this Article and are prescribed by regulation of the Commissioner, except that the Commissioner shall have no authority to prescribe records for the State of North Carolina, a city, town, county or other municipality or agency or instrumentality of government."

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 95-25.23A(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Any employer who violates the provisions of G.S. 95-25.15(b) or any regulation issued pursuant to G.S. 95-25.15(b), shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) per employee with the maximum not to exceed ~~one thousand dollars (\$1,000)~~ two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per investigation by the Commissioner or his the Commissioner's authorized representative. In determining the amount of the penalty, the Commissioner shall ~~consider~~ consider each of the following:

- (1) The appropriateness of the penalty for the size of the business of the employer ~~charged, and~~ charged.
- (2) The gravity of the violation.
- (3) Whether the violation involves an employee under 18 years of age.

The determination by the Commissioner shall be final, unless within 15 days after receipt of notice thereof by certified mail with return receipt, by signature confirmation as provided by the U.S. Postal Service, by a designated delivery service authorized pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 7502(f)(2) with delivery receipt, or via hand delivery, the person charged with the violation takes exception to the determination, in which event final determination of the penalty shall be made in an administrative proceeding pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 150B and in a judicial proceeding pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 150B."

**SECTION 4.** G.S. 95-138 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 95-138. Civil penalties.**



(a) The Commissioner, upon recommendation of the Director, or the North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission in the case of an appeal, shall have the authority to assess penalties against any employer who violates the requirements of this Article, or any standard, rule, or order adopted under this Article, as follows:

- (1) A minimum penalty of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to a maximum penalty of seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) may be assessed for each willful or repeat violation.
- (2) A penalty of up to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) shall be assessed for each serious ~~violation~~ violation, except that a penalty of up to fourteen thousand dollars (\$14,000) shall be assessed for each serious violation that involves injury to an employee under 18 years of age.
- (2a) A penalty of up to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) may be assessed for each violation that is adjudged not to be of a serious nature.
- (3) A penalty of up to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) may be assessed against an employer who fails to correct and abate a violation, within the period allowed for its correction and abatement, which period shall not begin to run until the date of the final Order of the Commission in the case of any appeal proceedings in this Article initiated by the employer in good faith and not solely for the delay of avoidance of penalties. The assessment shall be made to apply to each day during which the failure or violation continues.
- (4) A penalty of up to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) shall be assessed for violating the posting requirements, as required under the provisions of this Article.

(b) The Commissioner shall adopt uniform standards that the Commissioner, the Commission, and the hearing examiner shall apply when determining appropriateness of the penalty. The following factors shall be used in determining whether a penalty is appropriate:

- (1) Size of the business of the employer being charged.
- (2) The gravity of the violation.
- (3) The good faith of the employer.
- (4) The record of previous violations; provided that for purposes of determining repeat violations, only the record within the previous three years is applicable.
- (5) Whether the violation involves injury to an employee under 18 years of age.

The report of the hearing examiner and the report, decision, or determination of the Commission on appeal shall specify the standards applied in determining the reduction or affirmation of the penalty assessed by the Commissioner.

(c) The clear proceeds of all civil penalties and interest recovered by the Commissioner, together with the costs thereof, shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2."

**SECTION 5.** G.S. 95-139 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 95-139. Criminal penalties.**

(a) Any employer who willfully violates any standard, rule, regulation or order promulgated pursuant to the authority of this Article, and ~~said the~~ violation causes the death of any ~~employee, employee 18 years of age or older,~~ shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor, which may include a fine of not more than ten thousand dollars ~~(\$10,000); except that if the conviction is for a violation committed after a first conviction of such person, the employer shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor which may include a fine of not more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000).(\$10,000).~~

(b) Any employer who willfully violates any standard, rule, regulation, or order promulgated pursuant to the authority of this Article, and the violation causes the death of any employee under 18 years of age, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor, which may include a fine of not more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000).

(c) If an employer is convicted of more than one violation of subsection (a) or (b) of this section, the subsequent violation shall be penalized as follows:

- (1) The employer shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor which may include a fine of not more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) if the subsequent violation results in the death of an employee 18 years of age or older.

(2) The employer shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor which may include a fine of not more than forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) if the subsequent violation results in the death of an employee under 18 years of age.

(d) This section shall not prevent any prosecuting officer of the State of North Carolina from proceeding against such employer on a prosecution charging any degree of willful or culpable homicide. Any person who gives advance notice of any inspection to be conducted under this Article, without authority from the Commissioner, Director, or any of their agents to whom such authority has been delegated, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

(e) Whoever knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification in any application, record, report, plan, or any other document filed or required to be maintained pursuant to this Article, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor, which may include a fine of (i) not more than ten thousand dollars (~~\$10,000~~)-(\$10,000) for falsifications pertaining to employees 18 years of age or older or (ii) not more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for falsifications pertaining to employees under 18 years of age.

(f) Whoever shall commit any kind of assault upon or whoever kills a person engaged in or on account of the performance of investigative, inspection, or law-enforcement functions shall be subject to prosecution under the general criminal laws of the State and upon such charges as the proper prosecuting officer shall charge or allege."

**SECTION 6.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2009, and applies to violations occurring or offenses committed on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2009.

s/ Walter H. Dalton  
President of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue  
Governor

Approved 9:23 a.m. this 27<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2009