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/ NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Attorney General’s Office Announce Historic \$7.75M Settlement of Child Labor Law Violations with Chipotle Mexican Grill

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 20, 2022

TRENTON – New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo and Attorney General Matt Platkin announced today that they have reached an agreement with Chipotle Mexican Grill to resolve alleged widespread and persistent violations of the state’s child labor laws. Under today’s groundbreaking settlement with NJDOL, the popular fast-food restaurant chain will pay \$7.75 million, and has agreed to a far-reaching compliance plan for its 85 New Jersey locations aimed at putting an end to these practices.

The penalty arises from a 2020 NJDOL audit that identified approximately 30,660 alleged violations impacting minors at Chipotle locations across the state. The alleged violations include Chipotle’s failure to abide by limits on the number of hours minors are allowed to work and its failure to provide them timely and sufficient meal breaks. The franchise has cooperated with NJDOL to develop and implement measures to monitor future compliance and this week signed an agreement memorializing these terms.

All penalties received go to the NJDOL’s Child Labor Law Enforcement Trust Fund. The fund is used to enforce laws protecting children in the workplace, and to educate employers, employer organizations, employees, unions, teachers, counselors, and other professionals engaged in [work involving minors](#).

“This record settlement represents a significant public-private partnership aimed at protecting minors from workplace abuses,” said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo, whose agency led the investigation in close collaboration with the Affirmative Civil Rights and Labor Enforcement Section of the Department of Public Safety’s Division of Law. “After-school and summer employment can be of tremendous value to both the young worker and the employer, but these jobs cannot come at the expense of treating employees fairly.”

“New Jersey is committed to protecting all workers – especially young workers and others who are vulnerable and may not know their rights in the workplace,” said Acting Attorney General Platkin. “This historic settlement is just one result of the investments we have made throughout the Murphy Administration to proactively enforce our worker protection laws, and it should serve as a message to every employer that if you exploit your workers, you will be held accountable.”

New Jersey’s child labor laws are very specific about the number of hours minors are allowed to work, depending on their age and whether it’s a school day or during the summer.

To learn more about New Jersey’s labor laws, please visit: [myworkrights.nj.gov](#).

As part of the settlement, Chipotle committed to a long-term strategy to ensure future compliance with New Jersey’s child labor requirements, which includes periodic self-audits, designating a child labor compliance official, and mandatory formal training for all current and future managers, supervisors and staff members to raise awareness of New Jersey’s child labor protections and create a work environment that is safe, lawful and rewarding for minor employees.

“It makes good business sense to treat all workers, particularly minors, fairly and in accordance with the law,” Asaro-Angelo said. “There is no excuse for any business, particularly a major, profitable corporation with prior violations, to continually deny young employees their work rights.”



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The Labor Department audited Chipotle for the years 2017-2020. The audit was spurred by Chipotle’s history of child labor law violations in New Jersey and other states. Four Chipotle locations – Fort Lee, Bloomfield, Mays Landing and Parsippany – had been cited for Child Labor Law violations in 2016-2018.

Additionally, in Massachusetts, the company agreed to pay \$1.4 million in restitution and penalties in 2020 for child labor and wage violations at more than 50 locations in that state.

Of the total restitution, \$7.7 million was for penalties, and \$85,000 was for attorney fees.

The Chipotle matter was handled on behalf of the State by the following attorneys from the Division of Law’s Civil Rights and Labor Enforcement Section: Deputy Attorney General and Section Chief Peter Basso, Deputy Attorney General Nadya Comas, and former Deputy Attorney General Sarah Levine.

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