

R004 - Lead Poisoning (Women and Children) Recommendation, 1919 (No. 4)

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Preamble

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Washington by the Government of the United States of America on the 29 October 1919, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to women's and children's employment: unhealthy processes, which is part of the third and fourth items in the agenda for the Washington meeting of the Conference, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation,

adopts the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Lead Poisoning (Women and Children) Recommendation, 1919, to be submitted to the Members of the International Labour Organisation for consideration with a view to effect being given to it by national legislation or otherwise, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation:

1. The General Conference recommends to the Members of the International Labour Organisation that, in view of the danger involved to the function of maternity and to the physical development of children, women and young persons under the age of eighteen years be excluded from employment in the following processes:

- (a) in furnace work in the reduction of zinc or lead ores;
- (b) in the manipulation, treatment, or reduction of ashes containing lead, and the desilvering of lead;
- (c) in melting lead or old zinc on a large scale;
- (d) in the manufacture of solder or alloys containing more than ten per cent. of lead;
- (e) in the manufacture of litharge, massicot, red lead, white lead, orange lead, or sulphate, chromate or silicate (frit) of lead;
- (f) in mixing and pasting in the manufacture or repair of electric accumulators;
- (g) in the cleaning of workrooms where the above processes are carried on.

2. It is further recommended that the employment of women and young persons under the age of eighteen years in processes involving the use of lead compounds be permitted only subject to the following conditions:

- (a) locally applied exhaust ventilation, so as to remove dust and fumes at the point of origin;
- (b) cleanliness of tools and workrooms;
- (c) notification to Government authorities of all cases of lead poisoning, and compensation therefor;
- (d) periodic medical examination of the persons employed in such processes;
- (e) provision of sufficient and suitable cloak-room, washing, and mess-room accommodation, and of special protective clothing;

(f) prohibition of bringing food or drink into workrooms.

3. It is further recommended that in industries where soluble lead compounds can be replaced by non-toxic substances, the use of soluble lead compounds should be strictly regulated.

4. For the purpose of this Recommendation, a lead compound should be considered as soluble if it contains more than five per cent. of its weight (estimated as metallic lead) soluble in a quarter of one per cent. solution of hydrochloric acid.

Key Information

Recommendation concerning the Protection of Women and Children against Lead Poisoning

Adoption: Washington, 1st ILC session (28 Nov 1919)

Status: Requiring further action to ensure continued and future relevance.

See also

[Submissions to competent authorities by country](#)