
CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT LAW

BIG CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT LAWS COME
INTO EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2018
ARE YOU READY?



What Bill 148 Means for Employers

Ontario Employers need to keep informed about the significant changes coming into effect in the New Year to The Employment Standards Act, 2000 to ensure they remain compliant in the wake of Bill 148, also known as The Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017. Employers will be expected to comply with many of these changes as of January 1, 2018.

With that in mind, Ontario Employers need to take steps to review and update their Employment Contracts, Policies and Handbooks to reflect the new Leave Entitlements and Increases to the Minimum Wage, as outlined herein:

Minimum Wage Changes:

- As of January 1st, 2018 Ontario's General Minimum Wage will increase to \$14.00 an hour.
- This rate will rise again as of January 1st, 2019 to \$15.00 an hour.
- The Special Minimum Wage Rates (for Liquor Servers, Students under 18, Hunting & Fishing Guides, and Homeworkers) will be increased by the same percentage as the General Minimum Wage.

Changes to Ontario's Statutory Leaves of Absence taking effect January 1, 2018

In addition to the Increase in Minimum Wage, Bill 148 makes several changes to the entitlements of Ontario Employees to take job-protected time off work for specific circumstances:

PREGNANCY LOSS LEAVE:

- The entitlement to 6 weeks pregnancy leave, unpaid, increases to 12 weeks unpaid leave for employees who have suffered a miscarriage or stillbirth.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE:

- Employees will now be entitled to take up to 28 weeks unpaid leave to care for family members who are critically ill (previously they were entitled to up to 8 weeks).

CHILD DEATH LEAVE AND CRIME-RELATED CHILD DISAPPEARANCE:

- The entitlement of up to 104 weeks unpaid leave remains unchanged, however, leave is no longer limited to a child's death as a result of a crime and is now available if a child dies, regardless of the reason.
- New Section 49.6 retains the entitlement to crime-related child disappearance leave but increases the entitlement from up to 52 weeks to up to 104 weeks.

DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE LEAVE:

- Provides that an employee who has been employed by an employer for at least 13 consecutive weeks is entitled to up to 10 days (the first 5 of which, must be paid) plus up to 15 weeks unpaid per calendar year if the employee or a child of the employee experiences domestic or sexual violence or the threat of domestic or sexual violence.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY LEAVE:

- Leave of up to 10 days per calendar year to deal with a personal emergency is now available to all employees regardless of the size of the workplace (eliminating the 50 employee threshold).
 - 2 out of the 10 days now must be paid.
 - Employers can no longer require a medical note in support of request.
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