

# Preparing for More Change: What the Proposed *Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025* Would Mean for Ontario Employers

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Since March 2024, Ontario has passed three “Working for Workers” bills that introduced new requirements for employers. We previously provided overviews of the key changes pursuant to the [\*Working for Workers Four Act, 2024\*](#), [\*Working for Workers Five Act, 2024\*](#) and [\*Working for Workers Six Act, 2024\*](#). Employers in Ontario may face further changes as a result of Bill 30, the *Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025* (the “**Act**”), which introduces proposed amendments to the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (“**ESA**”), the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (“**OHSA**”), and the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* (“**WSIA**”). According to the Ontario government, the Act will protect workers and their families by ensuring safer workplaces and imposing strict penalties on those who seek to exploit or abuse workers.

The Act remains at its first reading at this time and does not specify when the proposed changes would take effect. As such, additional changes may be made to the Act before it receives Royal Assent. Below is a summary of the amendments currently proposed under the Act.

The Act amends the ESA in the following ways:

- **Job Seeking Leave:** Employees who receive a mass notice of termination—defined as the termination of at least 50 employees at the same workplace within a four-week period—will be entitled to take unpaid leave during the working notice period to seek new employment, attend interviews, or participate in training opportunities. Where possible, employees are expected to provide their employer with at least three days’ advance notice before commencing this leave. Employees who are provided with pay in lieu of notice or with a combination of working notice and pay in lieu of notice are not eligible for this leave.
- **Extended Lay-Off Provision:** Employers will be entitled to place employees on a new category of extended lay-off exceeding 35 weeks in any 52-week period, provided it does not reach 52 or more weeks within any 78-week period. The employer and employee must agree to this extended lay-off and it must be approved by the Director of Employment Standards. For employees who do not have a regular work week, the focus is on earnings rather than weeks. Specifically, an employee is on lay-off where their earnings are less than half of their average weekly pay.
- **Reporting Fraudulent Publicly Advertised Job Postings:** Anyone operating a job posting platform (ex. Indeed or LinkedIn) will be required to provide users with a clear and easily accessible method for reporting fraudulent publicly advertised job postings and maintain a written policy outlining the procedures for handling such reports. A “job posting platform” is defined as an online service that displays publicly advertised job postings. This excludes platforms operated by employers that advertise only their own positions.

The Act amends the OHSA in the following ways:

- **Administrative Penalties:** OHSA inspectors will be able to impose administrative penalties if they determine that an individual has contravened or failed to comply with a provision of the OHSA. The individual will be served with a notice of administrative penalty, specifying the nature of the violation and the amount of the penalty.
- **Defibrillator Requirements:** If an employer is required under the OHSA to equip a workplace with a defibrillator and fulfills this obligation, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board will reimburse the employer for the cost of the defibrillator.

The Act amends the WSIA in the following ways:

- **Prohibited False/Misleading Statements:** Employers will be subject to a monetary penalty if they make a false or misleading statement or representation to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board regarding any individual's claim for benefits under the insurance plan.
- **Penalty:** The following situations will be considered aggravating factors when deciding penalties for an employer under the WSIA:
  - The employer was previously convicted of an offence under the WSIA.
  - The employer has been convicted of two or more counts of the same offence in the legal proceeding to which the determination of the penalty relates.
  - The employer has a record of prior non-compliance with the WSIA.

#### **Key Takeaways**

Although the Act has not yet received Royal Assent and is therefore not yet law in Ontario, employers should familiarize themselves with these new obligations and take proactive steps—including consulting with employment counsel—to ensure they are prepared to comply once the Act comes into force.

Employers should also ensure that they are in compliance with the applicable requirements under all of the prior "Working for Workers" legislation.

*The information and comments herein are for the general information of the reader and are not intended as advice or opinion to be relied upon in relation to any particular circumstances. For particular application of the law to specific situations, the reader should seek professional advice.*

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