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PUBLICATION

Employment Update: Ontario Introduces the Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025

Date: July 30, 2025

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The Ontario government continues to propose significant reforms to the province's employment laws through its ongoing *Working for Workers Acts* with, most recently, the introduction of the seventh installment of the series. Bill 30, known as the *Working for Workers Seven Act*, *2025* ("Bill 30"), was introduced on May 28, 2025 and proposes to amend various workplace legislation including the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* ("*ESA*"), the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("*OHSA*"), and the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* ("*WSIA*").

Some of the key proposed changes arising from Bill 30 are set out below.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE *ESA*

- **Job Posting Platforms:** Requiring operators of job posting platforms to have a mechanism or procedure for users of the platform to report fraudulent publicly advertised job postings. A written policy with respect to fraudulent publicly advertised job postings will also be required, and it must be posted in at least one conspicuous place on the job posting platform.
- The proposed definition for "job posting platform" is an online platform that displays publicly advertised job postings but does not include an online platform operated by an employer that only advertises publicly advertised job postings for positions with the employer.
- **Job Seeking Leave:** Introducing a new leave of absence in circumstances of 50 or more employees receiving notice of termination. If an employee receives such notice, they will be entitled to three unpaid days' leave of absence for the purpose of engaging in activities related to obtaining employment. Employers must also provide information about provincial government programs for skills training and job search support. Employees will be excluded from this entitlement if they receive pay in lieu of notice covering 25% or less of the required notice period.
- **Extended Lay-offs:** Permitting extended lay-offs in certain circumstances. Specifically, a temporary lay-off may be 35 or more weeks in any period of 52 consecutive weeks, but not 52 or more weeks in any period of 78 consecutive weeks. An extended lay-off is permitted if the employer and employee agree to it and the Director approves.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE *OHSA*

- **Mandatory Defibrillators:** Requiring automated external defibrillators (AEDs) for construction projects that are expected to last three months or longer and which have 20 or more workers. If these criteria are met and, subject to the Regulations, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) shall provide reimbursement for the cost of the AED. There is no right of appeal with respect to the WSIB's decision regarding whether an employer is eligible for reimbursement.
- **Regulation Making Authority:** The Lieutenant Governor in Council will be authorized to make regulations with respect to (i) governing equivalency and requirements related to the use on a project of health and safety management systems accredited by the Chief Prevention Officer under section 7.6.1, (ii) record-keeping requirements related to the use on a project of health and safety management systems, and (iii) administrative penalties.
- **New Administrative Monetary Penalties:** Allowing inspectors to impose administrative penalties and issue penalty notices for contraventions of or failure to comply with the *OHSA*. Further, a person who pays an administrative penalty in accordance with the terms of the notice cannot be charged with an offence under the *OHSA* in respect of the same contravention or failure to comply. The range of penalties for specific violations will be prescribed by regulations.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE *WSIA*

- **Fraud Prohibitions:** Prohibiting employers from making false or misleading statements or representations to the WSIB in connection with a person's claim for benefits.
- **New Administrative Monetary Penalties:** Introducing new administrative penalties for (i) making false or misleading statements to the WSIB, (ii) failing to comply with the *WSIA* requirements with respect to maintaining accurate wage records and producing such records on request, and (iii) failing to pay insurance premiums when due.
- **Increased Maximum Fines:** Increasing the maximum fine for persons convicted of two or more counts of the same offence in the same legal proceeding to $750,000 for each conviction. The proposed aggravated factors for determining the amount of the fine include previous convictions under the *WSIA* and a history of non-compliance.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSED AMEDMENTS

- Amending the *Municipal Act, 2001* to authorize the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations imposing limits and conditions on the power of a municipality under this Act in relation to certain undertakings relating to training or skills development.
- Amending the *Ontario Immigration Act, 2015* to provide that inspectors may require in-person interviews with individuals during an investigation for the Ontario Nominee Immigration Program, separate and apart from other persons.

TAKEAWAY

Bill 30 is still making its way through Ontario's Legislative Assembly, which may lead to further changes to the proposed amendments prior to being passed. If Bill 30 is passed, the amendments will come into force on the date that the legislation receives Royal Assent or on a date to be proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor. We will continue to monitor the progress of Bill 30 and provide further updates as more information becomes available.

If you have questions about the changes proposed by Bill 30, or how it might impact your workplace, please reach out to a member of Blaney's Employment & Labour Group.

The authors would like to acknowledge and thank summer student Emily-Rose Njonde for her contributions to this article.

The information contained in this article is intended to provide information and comment, in a general fashion, about recent developments in the law and related practice points of interest. The information and views expressed are not intended to provide legal advice. For specific legal advice, please contact us.