

## Ontario Eliminates Cap and Extends Time Limit for Wage Recovery

*Protections for Vulnerable Workers Now in Effect*

NEWS

February 20, 2015

There is no longer a ceiling on the amount Ontarians can claim for wages owed. Employees also now have up to two years to recover those wages, under recent amendments to the [Employment Standards Act, 2000](#) (ESA).

Passed last fall, [The Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, 2014](#) eliminates the \$10,000 cap on the recovery of wages that the Ministry of Labour can order an employer to pay and increases the period of recovery to two years. These changes apply with respect to any unpaid wages that come due on or after today's date.

The change brings Ontario in line with other Canadian jurisdictions that have removed caps and set longer time limits for employees to recover wages. The legislation supports Ontario's [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) and is designed to increase protections for vulnerable workers.

Increasing protections for vulnerable workers is part of the government's economic plan for Ontario. The four-part plan is building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure like roads and transit, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives and building a secure savings plan so everyone can afford to retire.

### QUOTES

"These changes protect the most vulnerable workers and level the playing field for employers who play by the rules. By acting to strengthen workplace protections for the most vulnerable, and increasing fairness for employees and businesses, we are helping to build stronger workplaces, a stronger economy, and a stronger Ontario."

-- Kevin Flynn, Minister of Labour

### QUICK FACTS

- The previous cap and time limit under the ESA will still apply to wages owed before Feb. 20, 2015.
- Other changes under the act will also help vulnerable employees who earn minimum wage, do temporary work and work as temporary foreign workers.
- The new legislation builds on work reflected in recent reports such as the United Way/McMaster University "It's More Than Poverty" report prepared by the Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario research group and the "Vulnerable Workers and Precarious Work" report by the Law Commission of Ontario.

### LEARN MORE

Learn more about [The Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, 2014](#).

Know your rights under [Ontario's Employment Standards Act, 2000](#).

Review the [Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals Act](#).

Find out more about [minimum wage](#).

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