

Protecting Ontario's Vulnerable Workers

Province Introducing Stronger Rules and Enforcement Measures for Increased Fairness

NEWS

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Ontario is introducing legislation to provide more protection to the province's vulnerable workforce while increasing fairness for both employees and businesses.

The Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, to be introduced today, would protect vulnerable workers while creating a level playing field for companies that follow the rules by:

- Eliminating the \$10,000 cap on the recovery of unpaid wages and increasing the period of recovery from six and 12 months to two years for employees. This would help keep more disputes out of the court system, saving both employees and businesses time and money.
- Making temporary help agencies and their clients liable for employment standards violations, helping to decrease the number of companies that hire individuals solely to work in unsafe conditions.
- Prohibiting employers from charging fees and seizing personal documents like passports from temporary foreign workers by extending the application of the Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals to cover all foreign employees who come to Ontario under an immigration or temporary foreign employee program.

The government is also boosting the number of enforcement officers in the province to ensure more workplaces are inspected and employees are protected.

Strengthening protections for vulnerable workers is part of the Ontario government's plan to invest in people, build modern infrastructure and support a dynamic and innovative business climate.

QUOTES

"Our government is standing up for workers and increasing fairness for business with this bill. It's about taking action to protect the most vulnerable workers and level the playing field for employers who play by the rules because we know that these are the building blocks of stronger workplaces, a stronger economy and a stronger Ontario."

— Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Labour

QUICK FACTS

- The proposed legislation supports Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- The number of temporary foreign workers in Ontario has risen from 91,000 in 2008 to 120,000 in 2012.
- If passed, Ontario will join Nunavut, Newfoundland and Labrador as provinces and territories that have set longer time limits for the recovery of wages, allowing workers more time to get the wages they are owed.

LEARN MORE

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

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

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