

# Employment Standards in Ontario

The Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA) sets minimum standards for most workplaces in Ontario. Special rules and exemptions apply to certain employees.

## What you need to know

Employers are prohibited from penalizing employees in any way for exercising **ESA** rights.

**Hours of Work and Eating Periods:** There are daily and weekly limits on hours of work. Employees may work more if certain conditions are met. Employees must not work more than 5 consecutive hours without a 30-minute meal break. Learn more at [Ontario.ca/hoursofwork](http://Ontario.ca/hoursofwork).

**Overtime Pay:** Overtime is payable after 44 hours of work in a week for most jobs. The overtime rate must be at least 1½ times the regular rate of pay.

**Minimum Wage:** Most employees are entitled to be paid at least the minimum wage. For current rates visit [Ontario.ca/minimumwage](http://Ontario.ca/minimumwage).

**Payday:** Employees must be paid on a regular payday and receive a wage statement.

**Vacation Time and Pay:** Most employees earn at least 2 weeks of vacation time after every 12 months. They must be paid at least 4% of the total wages they earned as vacation pay.

**Public Holidays:** Ontario has 9 public holidays each year. Most employees are entitled to take these days off work and be paid public holiday pay.

**Leaves of Absence:** There are a number of job-protected unpaid leaves of absence including pregnancy, parental, family caregiver, and personal emergency leave.

**Termination Notice and Pay:** In most cases, employers must give advance written notice when terminating employment and/or termination pay instead of notice. Learn more at [Ontario.ca/terminationofemployment](http://Ontario.ca/terminationofemployment).

**Other ESA Rights and Special Rules:** There are other rights as well as special rules not listed on this poster including rights to severance pay and special rules for assignment employees of temporary help agencies.

### Contact the Ministry of Labour for more information

Call us at 416-326-7160, 1-800-531-5551, TTY 1-866-567-8893, or visit our website at [Ontario.ca/employmentstandards](http://Ontario.ca/employmentstandards). Information is available in multiple languages.

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