



What's New in HR Law

Ontario Government Announces Mandatory Closure of all Non-Essential Workplaces

March 24, 2020

COVID-19 Update

On [March 23, 2020](#), the Ontario Government announced new measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. Premier Doug Ford has ordered the mandatory closure of all non-essential workplaces effective today at 11:59 p.m. This closure will be in effect for 14 days and may be extended.

Essential Workplaces

Following its announcement, the Government of Ontario released a list of essential workplaces that will be permitted to continue operations and will not be affected by the mandatory closure order. Some of the highlights include:

This update is for general discussion purposes and does not constitute legal advice or an opinion.

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- Retail and Wholesaling
 - Businesses engaged in the retail and wholesale sale of food, pet food and supplies, and household consumer products, including grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, markets and other similar retailers
 - Beer, wine and liquor stores and alcohol producers
 - Gas stations, diesel, propane and heating fuel providers
 - Businesses providing pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical services
- Food Services and Accommodations
 - Restaurants and other food facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or takeaway, together with food delivery services
- Telecommunications and IT Infrastructure/Service Providers
 - Businesses providing telecommunications services and businesses engaged in providing or supporting Information Technology
- Transportation
 - Taxis and other private transportation providers
 - Businesses and facilities that provide transportation services to businesses and individuals including by air, water, road, and rail
- Manufacturing and Production
 - Manufacturing facilities and businesses that support the movement of essential goods within global supply chains
- Agriculture and Food Production
 - Businesses that farm, harvest, process, manufacture, produce or distribute food and other products
- Construction
 - Construction projects and services associated with critical provincial infrastructure and the healthcare sector
 - Construction work and services, including demolition services, in the industrial, commercial, institutional and residential sectors
- Financial Activities
 - Capital markets, banking and insurance
- Communications Industries
 - Newspaper publishers and radio and television broadcasters
- Health Care and Seniors Care and Social Services
 - Retirement homes, long-term care facilities and organizations that provide home care services

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- Other Businesses
 - Businesses providing mailing, shipping, courier and delivery services
 - Laundromats, dry cleaners and laundry service providers
 - Professional services including lawyers and paralegals

- Supply Chains
 - Businesses that supply other essential businesses or services

This is a non-exhaustive list of essential workplaces. A complete list is available [here](#).

Non-Essential Workplaces

Businesses that can continue operations with employees working remotely, or through other contingency measures, have until 11:59 p.m. on March 24, 2020 to prepare, implement and adapt to the order.

Employees who are unable to work from home are entitled to Declared Emergency Leave. Declared Emergency Leave provides employees with an **unpaid** leave of absence where an employee is unable to perform the duties of his or her position because of a declared emergency.

Please review our previous update for a detailed discussion of [other benefits](#) available to workers affected by COVID-19.

Future Updates

Our firm continues to closely monitor the developments surrounding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and will continue to provide further updates as new information becomes available.

Need more information?

For more information regarding workplace management amidst the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, contact [Emily La Mantia](#) at 416-408-5511, or your regular lawyer at the firm.



management labour and employment law



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