

Public Health Orders Removed: Employment Standards and Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines for Employers and Workers

July 9, 2021

As of July 11, 2021 the state of emergency will have been lifted in Saskatchewan and the public health orders will no longer be in place. Several regulatory and legislative amendments under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* will no longer be in effect at that time.

Public Health Emergency Leave

- Once the orders have been removed and the restrictions are no longer in place, the unpaid public health emergency leave is not currently accessible for workers.
- Workers will continue to be entitled to job protection if they contract COVID-19 for up to 12 days in a calendar year or 12 weeks in 52, depending on the seriousness. This also applies if the employee must care for a member of their immediate family who is ill.
- Currently until September 25, 2021, eligible workers will have job protection to be able to access the Canada Recovery Caregiver Benefit and Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit.

Temporary Layoff Provisions

- Employers have 14 days from the date of the removal of the public health orders to schedule workers back to the workplace or they need to terminate the working relationship and provide pay instead of notice.
- Employees who have not been scheduled are considered terminated and pay instead of notice is due within 14 days. Pay instead of notice is calculated from wages previous to the date the employee was first laid off.
- Workers generally must be returned to work under the same terms and conditions that they had prior to the layoff.
- An employer can lay off a worker for a maximum of two weeks following the end of the public emergency period however, the employee would be entitled to pay instead of notice.

Occupational Health and Safety

- Under *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*, employers must take every reasonable precaution to protect the health and safety of workers.
- Not all employers will be required to have a written exposure control plan, section 6-22 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020* outlines who needs a plan.
- Upon request to an employer, workers are able to take a minimum of three consecutive hours of paid time off to receive a COVID-19 vaccine during work hours.

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