
Resources for Manitoba Based Employers Re: COVID-19

Legal Resources

There are many law firms publishing information on their websites to provide guidance to employers for issues related to COVID-19. I recommend the following resources:

- Taylor McCaffrey (<https://tmlawyers.com/>) is a Manitoba based law firm with expertise in labour and employment. They have a COVID-19 information centre that includes information for employers: <https://tmlawyers.com/?resources=covid-19-answering-employers-frequently-asked-questions-about-novel-coronavirus>
- Thompson Dorfman Sweatman (<https://www.tdslaw.com/>) is a Manitoba based law firm with expertise in labour and employment. They have a COVID-19 resource centre that includes information for employers: <https://www.tdslaw.com/covid-19/labour-and-employment-update-on-covid-19/>

Government Support

The federal government has announced a number of financial supports for both employers and employees: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

The provincial government has also provided information for employers: <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/infomanitobans/workplaces.html>

Employment Standards

The Manitoba *Employment Standards Code* addresses topics such as:

- Leaves of Absence: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/standards/>
- Layoff and Termination: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/standards/>

If you are considering temporary layoffs, please note that the maximum duration is 8 weeks in a 16 week period. The *Code* also provides opportunity for employers to extend this period of time by continuing to pay wages or payments instead of wages, or to continue to make payments to both pension and group insurance plans on behalf of employees. In the current uncertainty, you may want to consider this option because an employee who does not return to work after a layoff of 8 weeks in a 16 week period is deemed to be terminated. An employee whose continuing employment relationship with their employer is terminated is entitled to notice under the *Code* as well as common law notice that is typically paid as severance in lieu of a reasonable notice period.

Employment Insurance (EI)

The federal employment insurance program provides income replacement benefits to eligible employees who are sick, terminated, or laid off: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html> The government has also announced an expansion of the Work-Sharing program that provides EI benefits to eligible employees who agree to reduce their normal working hours and share the available work while their employer recovers: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing/guide-applicant.html>