

Alberta Compliance Alert: A New Round of Emergency ESC Changes



One of the first things Alberta did to deal with the COVID-19 emergency is give unpaid leave to employees inflicted with or affected by the virus. On April 6, just 2 weeks later, the government announced a new round of *Employment Standards Code* changes in response to the pandemic. Highlights:

- Indefinite extension of duration of unpaid leave to employees caring for children affected by school and daycare closures or ill or self-isolated family members due to COVID-19;
- Waiver of requirement that employees have 90 days of employment to take the above leave;
- Extension of maximum duration of temporary layoff from 60 to 120 days retroactive to March 17, 2020;
- Elimination of 24-hour written notice requirement for shift changes and 2 weeks' notice to work schedules under averaging agreements;
- Elimination of requirement to provide group termination notice to employees and unions for terminations of 50 or more employees.

As of April 7, the announced changes haven't officially taken effect but the government press release says they will do so "immediately."