

B.C. Workers Granted Job-Protected Leave To Get COVID-19 Vaccine



On April 1, 2021, the B.C. Government expanded the scope of the current unpaid COVID-19 related leave by granting all part-time and full-time workers with the ability to take unpaid time away from work to receive the COVID-19 vaccine with assurance that they won't lose their jobs.

The leave also permits workers unpaid time off work to take dependents to receive the vaccine.

The province has made regulatory changes to the *Employment Standards Act* (B.C.) to account for this change, and is currently exploring options to provide workers with paid leave while getting their vaccine, however this is currently still in the consultation phase.

Additional changes to the *Employment Standards Act* (B.C.) include expanding the provincial COVID-19 related leave to align with the federal Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) and the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB). A worker can now take COVID-19 related leave if they need to care for family members, not just dependents, due to COVID-19. Workers with underlying conditions, who are undergoing treatment or who have contracted another illness that makes them more susceptible to COVID-19, will also be allowed to take the leave.

The Federal Government made changes to the CRSB and CRCB after B.C. initially introduced the COVID-19 related leave last March, so these new changes ensure job protection for all eligible federal benefit programs.

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