

Deadline for Paying Employees Their Wages – Know The Laws of Your Province



Prompt payment of wages is a fundamental requirement under employment standards laws. But rather than using words “prompt,” “timely”, or “immediate,” the employment standards list a deadline for payment. In most jurisdictions, there are actually 2 forms of deadline:

- A cap on how long the duration between payments may last; and
- A maximum number of days by which employers must make payment for a pay period after that pay period expires.

The tightest timetables are in BC, Manitoba, Québec, and the Maritimes where employers must pay wages at least semi-monthly. But the deadline for payment varies:

- 5 days from expiration of pay period: Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island.
- 7 days from expiration of pay period: BC, Newfoundland.
- 10 days from expiration of pay period: Manitoba.
- No specific deadline from expiration of pay period: Québec.

On the other side of the spectrum, a pay period can last up to one month in Alberta, the territories, and the Federal jurisdiction. All of these jurisdictions limit how much time from the expiry of the pay period the payment must be made, with one exception: the Federal jurisdiction.

The wage payment rules are the least strict in Ontario where the ESA requires merely that employers establish a recurring pay period and pay day without specifying how long the pay period can last or how soon after the pay period the pay day must be.

Here’s a look at the wage payment deadline requirements in each part of Canada. Keep in mind is that the rules governing timing of wage payments generally don’t apply to termination, vacation and other payments for which there are separate rules.

FEDERAL

Employer must pay wages or other amounts to which the employee is entitled within 30 days from the time when the entitlement to those wages or other amounts arose

(Canada Labour Code, Sec. 247(b)).

ALBERTA

1. A pay period must not be longer than one work month (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 7(2)).
2. Wages, overtime pay, and general holiday pay earned in a pay period must be paid no later than 10 consecutive days after the end of each pay period (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 8(1)).

BRITISH COLUMBIA

1. Employer must pay employees all wages earned by the employees in a pay period at least semi-monthly and within 8 days after the end of the pay period (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 17(1)).
2. **Exception:** Above requirement doesn't apply to overtime wages credited to an employee's time bank, or vacation pay (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 17(2)).

MANITOBA

1. Employer must pay an employee the wages earned by the employee at least semi-monthly and within 10 working days after the expiration of each pay period (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 86(1)).
2. **Exception:** Above requirement doesn't apply to an employer who pays wages in accordance with:
 - An established custom or practice that has been followed by the employer since 1976; or
 - A permit issued by the employment standards director, upon application by the employer, that specifies when the wages are to be paid (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 86(2)).

NEW BRUNSWICK

1. Employer must pay its employees at such times that the interval between pay is no more than 16 days (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 35(1)).
2. When paying an employee, the employer must include all wages earned up to and including a day that's no more than 7 calendar days before the time fixed for payment (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 35(2)).
3. An employee who's absent at the time fixed for payment or who, for any other reason, isn't paid at that time, is entitled to be paid on demand any time thereafter during regular hours of work (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 35(3)).
4. **Exception:** Employer doesn't have to comply with Items 1 and 2 above if the payments are otherwise made in accordance with the terms of a practice that was in existence in 1984 or under the terms of a collective agreement or in accordance with the provisions of an order of the Director granted on application (*Employment Standards Code*, Sec. 35(4)).

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Employer must pay employees all of the wages they earned in a pay period at least semi-monthly and within 7 days after the end of the pay period (*Labour Standards*

Act, Sec. 33(1)).

NOVA SCOTIA

1. Employer must at least as often as semi-monthly pay each of its employees all wages earned by the employee and make that payment within 5 working days after the expiration of each pay period (*Labour Standards Code*, Sec. 79(1)).
2. An employee who's absent at the time fixed for payment or who, for any other reason, isn't paid at that time, is entitled to the pay at any time thereafter during regular hours of work on demand (*Labour Standards Code*, Sec. 79(2)).
3. **Exception:** Employer doesn't have to comply with Item 1 above if the payments are made in accordance with the terms of an existing practice or under the terms of an existing collective agreement, or in accordance with the provisions of an order of the Director granted on application (*Labour Standards Code*, Sec. 79(3)).

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

1. Employer must calculate an employee's wages for a pay period of no longer than one month, unless a longer pay period is approved by the Employment Standards Officer (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 13(1)).
2. Employer must pay the employee within 10 days after the pay period all wages earned by the employee in that period (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 13(2)).
3. An employee who's absent or unable to receive the wages in accordance with Item 2 above is entitled, on request, to receive payment of his or her wages during normal working hours (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 13(3)).

NUNAVUT

1. A period of employment for computation of wages earned must not exceed one calendar month unless a longer period is approved by the Board (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 50(1)).
2. Employer must within 10 days after the pay period pay to the employee all wages earned by the employee in that period (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 50(2)).
3. An employee who's absent at the time fixed for payment of wages, or who, for any other reason, isn't paid at that time, is entitled to the payment at any time after that during normal working hours (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 50(4)).
4. The Labour Standards Officer may exempt any employee or class of employee or any employer or class of employer from any of the above requirements (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 49).

ONTARIO

1. Employer must establish a recurring pay period and a recurring pay day and pay all wages earned during each pay period, other than accruing vacation pay, no later than the pay day for that period (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 11(1)).
2. No specific limits on duration of pay periods or the amount of time between pay periods and pay days.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

1. Employer must pay employee at such times that the interval between pay is no more than 16 days (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 5.2(3)(a)).
2. When paying an employee, employer must include all wages earned up to and including a day that's no more than 5 working days before the time fixed for payment (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 5.2(3)(b)).
3. **Exception:** Employer doesn't have to comply with Items 1 or 2 above if the payments are otherwise made under the terms of a collective agreement or in accordance with an order of the Board (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 5.2(4)).
4. An employee who's absent at the time fixed for payment of wages or who, for any other reason, isn't paid at that time, is entitled to be paid on demand thereafter, during regular hours of work (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 5.2(5)).

QUÉBEC

1. Wages must be paid at regular intervals of no more than 16 days, or one month in the case of managerial personnel or of workers working under certain kinds of contracts (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 43).
2. Any amount in excess of the regular wages, such as a bonus or premium for overtime, earned during the week preceding payment of the wages may be paid with the subsequent regular payment or at the time prescribed by a particular provision of a collective agreement or decree (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 43).
3. Item 1 above doesn't ban an employer from paying an employee within one month after the start of their employment (*Labour Standards Act*, Sec. 43).

SASKATCHEWAN

1. Employer must pay to an employee the total wages to which the employee is entitled up to a day no more than 6 days before the employee's payday (*Sask Employment Act*, Sec. 2-33(1)(a)).
2. Employer must pay the employee at least monthly, semi-monthly or every 14 days (*Sask Employment Act*, Sec. 2-33(1)(b)).
3. Employer may only pay an employee on a monthly basis if the employee is paid a salary expressed as a monthly wage or a wage expressed for a period longer than a month (*Sask Employment Act*, Sec. 2-33(2)).

YUKON TERRITORY

Employer must, no later than 10 days after the expiration of each pay period, pay to the employee all wages, other than vacation pay, owing to the employee in respect of that pay period (*Employment Standards Act*, Sec. 65(1)).