



COVID-19:

Health and Emergency Protections

Urgent and Comprehensive Action Needed to Protect Workers in Nova Scotia

LABOUR STANDARDS CODE REFORM

Paid Personal Days

Provide 12 annual paid personal days, accrued at 1 day / month, which can be used for personal illness, family illness, injury, or emergency (scheduled or unscheduled).

Emergency Leave

Provide 21 days of paid emergency leave (in addition to the personal days) for employees who are forced to abstain from working because of a public health crisis.

End sick note requirements

Forcing employees to go to a doctor's office to substantiate sick leave extends illness and puts a strain on the healthcare system. Employers should only be allowed to request doctors' notes if they have reason to believe an employee is abusing sick leave.

End reprisal against absent workers during crisis

Prohibit employers from disciplining or otherwise reprising against workers who stay home due to public health directives, including for childcare needs.

Make unionizing more accessible

Sick leave provisions that are negotiated between employees' unions and employers are more adaptive to the individual circumstances of the business. It should be easier in Nova Scotia for employees to bargain collectively with their employers.

Vigorously protect employees from reprisals

Employees should never be afraid to access their statutory rights. It needs to be made clear that reprising against employees who enforce their rights under employment standards, Human Rights, occupational health and safety, or trade union legislation will not be tolerated.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE RELIEF

Reduce hours required to qualify for Employment Insurance benefits

With part-time, casual, contract, and temporary work on the rise, it is almost impossible for many workers to accumulate enough hours to qualify for EI. All workers should qualify for EI benefits after 360 hours of work.

Flat Rate Emergency Support Benefits

The Emergency Support Benefits should be issued as a flat rate of \$900 bi-weekly regardless of applicants insurable hours.

Employment Insurance for Migrant Workers

Ensure that all migrants with 900 series social insurance numbers have access to both regular and special benefits both here in Canada and their home country.

INCOME ASSISTANCE RELIEF

Increase Income Assistance Benefits

Raise the Standard Household Rate across the Board by \$200 per adult to provide for increased food, transportation, and medical expenses related to the public health crisis.

Expedite Income Assistance Applications

Issue basic and special needs benefits to all new applicants within a week based on reported circumstances and provide applicants with 60 days to submit supporting documentation.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES RELIEF AND REFORMS

Moratorium on Evictions

Instruct the Director of Residential Tenancies Program and Small Claims Courts to adjourn all applications for vacant possession of residential premises and halt all pending eviction orders until June 1, 2020.

Rent Control

Issue an Order in Council to eliminate the exemption of all classes of residential premises from the Rent Review Act.

The Halifax Workers' Action Centre