

Ontario Government Announces Review of Exemptions under the Employment Standards Act

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On October 18, 2017, the Government of Ontario announced that between October 18, 2017 and December 1, 2017, it will be seeking input from the public to review certain exemptions under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (the “ESA”). The announcement signals a potential for further changes to labour and employment laws in Ontario in addition to those currently contemplated under Bill 148.

The public consultations will focus on the following eight occupations that are currently exempt from varying minimum employment standards under the ESA, including minimum wage, hours of work and overtime:

1. Architects
2. Domestic Workers
3. Homemakers
4. IT Professionals
5. Managerial and Supervisory Employees
6. Pharmacists
7. Residential Building Superintendents, Janitors and Caretakers
8. Residential Care Workers

The review follows the recommendations made by the Special Advisors in their final report of the Changing Workplaces, released on May 23, 2017. In the final report, the Special Advisors found that the current exemptions under the ESA resulted in only a minority of Ontario workers being fully covered under the ESA and that the exemptions “disproportionately affected the disadvantaged and contributed to the precariousness of work and the presence of vulnerable groups.” The final report recommended that the Government make the review of existing exemptions a “top priority.”

For more information on how to participate in the public consultation process, visit the Ministry of Labour website [here](#).

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