

August 31, 2015

VIA EMAIL: CWR.SpecialAdvisors@ontario.ca

Changing Workplaces Review
Employment Labour and Corporate Policy Branch,
Ministry of Labour
400 University Ave., 12th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1T7

RE: Submissions on Ontario's Labour & Employment Law Regime

Messrs. Mitchell and Murray:

On behalf of EG Industries Canada Inc. I am writing to offer our company's submission on the Changing Workplaces Review, currently being undertaken by the Ontario Ministry of Labour.

EG Industries Canada is a manufacturer of plastic injection molded parts and assembly for the automotive industry. The biggest concern for EG Industries Canada is in regards to Personal Emergency Leave days.

When an employee is hired by a company, the employment contract usually states in some form or another that the employee will work for the employer for a set number hours of work in a day and in a certain period of time. Therefore the employee has that responsibility of coming to work each scheduled day in order to fulfill the employment contract and this is also the employer's expectation. As an employer, we understand that sometimes emergency situations do arise and there is a need to accommodate situations for our associates. EG Industries Canada as well as many other automotive industry manufacturers willingly offer extended benefits to their employees for these instances. These would include things like paid bereavement days, paid jury duty days, short term disability and sick days. We also offer "emergency vacation days" to those that are truly sick or have an emergency and can't afford a day off, they have the option of using a vacation day in order to get paid. Since the implementation of the Personal Emergency Leave Day as a protected leave, employee absenteeism has more than doubled. Our facility is seeing an average of seven personal emergency leave days used per person and we are a small sized manufacturing facility at only 80 employees. As you can imagine 7 days per person results in an astounding 560 lost shifts per year of manufacturing that we need to make up due to absences that were not planned. Cost to covering these absences are incurred by hiring additional manpower to cover lost production hours or paying overtime to current associates. Last year alone, these absences cost our company close to \$100,000. In most cases, it is believed that employees abuse the personal emergency leave day and use it for additional days off of work. They feel they are entitled to this time off and ask questions such as "how many EL days do I have left or have I used?" Trends also show that Emergency Leave days are consumed mostly on Fridays and Mondays which leads us to believe they are being consumed to enjoy extra-long weekends.

Our wish, for your review is to eliminate or decrease the number of personal emergency leave days currently protected by the ESA. Employers in Ontario are doing everything they can to keep business in the area. The unemployment rate in our area is low. The market is dry. Employees will gravitate to the employers that do treat them fairly and leave the ones that don't. We try to treat our employees as best we can in order to provide the greatest possible work environment. Please don't let the small portion of poor employers that don't treat their employees well, impact how the ESA affects the good employers that recognize the value of their employees and treat them fairly.

One other comment we would like to bring forth is in regards to the section of the ESA on Hours of Work. Manufacturing can be very demanding. The majority of automotive manufacturers operate in a "Just in Time" method in order to keep costs down. Unexpected events can change the manufacturing environment instantly (machine break downs, absenteeism, poor weather conditions etc.) We feel this section should be re-evaluated and re written for the manufacturing sector. It is very hard to control the unforeseen circumstances that can occur suddenly and the instant demand for manpower needed in order to meet the "Just in Time" method. We would like to see the elimination of the Excess Hours Agreement and let those employees who want to work more than 48 hours, have that opportunity without involving the Director and a wall posting. We do recognize that not all employees want to do this and would recommend that only those that don't want excess hours sign an agreement that they will only work the maximum 48 hours. If our recommendation does not occur, we would like to see a more clear definition of what constitutes an "Exceptional Circumstance" in working more than the maximum number of hours in a week rule. It seems to be a grey area and can be largely based upon who is doing the interpretation.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Tanyle Goforth

Human Resources Manager

EG Industries Canada, ULC

519-273-3733 Ext 4313