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## ONTARIO GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NEW REGULATIONS TO PROTECT EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS DURING COVID-19

Toronto - June 1 2020 - Today, the Ontario government announced that it enacted a [new regulatory amendment](#) which is entitled “Ontario Extending Infectious Disease Emergency Leave for Workers during COVID-19” that will affect both employers and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Non-unionized employees will effectively be on Infectious Disease Emergency Leave if employers are forced to temporarily reduce hours of work, including temporary layoff, due to COVID-19.

The provincial update is meant to protect businesses from permanent closure during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also protect employees by keeping them employed while businesses endure financial and operational hardship. Under normal *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) conditions, after a certain period of time, an employee who has been temporarily laid off will be automatically deemed terminated by the employer. Under the new regulatory amendment, that is no longer the case. Employers do not have to terminate an employee, even if their ESA temporary layoff or leave period has expired. The changes are retroactive to March 1, 2020.

It is important to note that this amendment allows employees to benefit from federal emergency income support programs. It also provides a certain amount of legal protection for employees. For employers, the amendment ensures financial protection from having to pay costly termination pay as the economy slowly begins to reopen.

While this change is not permanent, the end date remains flexible and the amendment changes will expire six weeks after the declared emergency ends.

**Christopher Cassidy**  
Tel.: 416.214.2329  
[ccassidy@thehumlawfirm.ca](mailto:ccassidy@thehumlawfirm.ca)

### About Hum Law Firm:

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**Toronto Main Office:** 100 Simcoe Street, Suite 305, Toronto, ON M5H 3G2 | **Telephone:** 416.214.2329 | **Fax:** 416.596.9055  
**Markham Meeting Office:** 15 Allstate Parkway, Suite 600, Markham, ON L3R 5B4 | **Telephone:** 905.474.7260 |  
**Website:** [www.thehumlawfirm.ca](http://www.thehumlawfirm.ca) | **Contact:** [info@thehumlawfirm.ca](mailto:info@thehumlawfirm.ca) |