



Manitoba Trucking Association

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As Manitobans continue to seek out and receive vaccinations for COVID-19, the Province has launched two initiatives to ease this process for employees and employers:

- Amendments to the Manitoba Labour Code (Bill 73) that unambiguously specify this type of leave as an employee entitlement, and
- A new financial support program for employers that enables their employees to take sick leave with pay related to COVID vaccinations, if such leave is not already included in employment contracts.

Manitoba Labour Code Amendments (Bill 73)

Bill 73, which received First Reading on May 12th and was Proclaimed on May 13th, amended the *Manitoba Labour Code* by adding provisions for employee COVID vaccinations. These provisions will supplement the COVID-related amendments that were made in 2020. The new provisions include the following:

COVID-19 vaccination leave

An employee is entitled to paid leave for the purpose of being vaccinated against the communicable disease known as COVID-19.

Length of leave

Paid leave under this section is for the amount of time the employee is required to be absent from work, up to a maximum of three hours for each time the employee is vaccinated.

Wage rate that applies

For each hour or part of an hour of paid leave that an employee is entitled to receive under this section, the employer must pay the employee

(a) the regular wage rate that applies to the employee's regular hours of work during the pay period in which the leave occurs; or

(b) if the employee's wage for regular hours of work varies from pay period to pay period, the employee's average hourly wage as determined by the following formula:

average hourly wage = A/B

In this formula,

A is the employee's total wages, excluding overtime wages, for the four-week period immediately before the leave began;

B is the total number of regular hours of work worked by the employee during the four-week period immediately before the leave began.

Employee to give notice to employer

An employee who wishes to take a leave under this section must give the employer as much notice as is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances.

Verification

If requested by the employer, the employee must, as soon as practicable, provide evidence of the employee's entitlement to the leave.

Manitoba Pandemic Sick Leave Program

On May 7, the Province of Manitoba announced new financial benefits to employers for sick leave related to the COVID-19 pandemic, "to help fill gaps between federal programming and current provincial employment standards for paid sick leave" ([News Release](#)).

The voluntary program will enable employers to receive "up to \$600 per employee for up to five full days of COVID-19 related sick leave, which do not have to be taken consecutively" (News Release).

The types of time-off that employees take, which qualify under the program includes "testing, vaccinations and side-effects, self isolation due to COVID-19 symptoms, or care of a loved one in any of these circumstances".

Members are encouraged to visit [this website](#) for more details about this program.

This program ensures that employees who are afraid of missing work and the associated pay, have no reason to use this as an excuse to avoid:

- getting tested for COVID-19
- getting vaccinated for COVID-19
- self-isolating if they have COVID-19 symptoms, or
- taking time to ensure that a loved one does these things.

The program enables employees to still get paid by their employer if they do this. The employer can apply to the program to get reimbursed up to \$600 per employee for this purpose.

Employers who already provide paid sick leave are not eligible for the program. Employees who have already exhausted paid sick leave benefits are not eligible for the program.

The Pandemic Sick Leave Program helps to make employees and work places safer because it helps Manitoba get closer to achieving its vaccination goals, and by doing so, helps Manitoba get to the point where fewer pandemic restrictions are needed.