## $\checkmark$ Easy Reading

# Work Laws and Your Pay Stub 

A workbook to help you understand rules about your pay


## Advisors and Tutors

Easy Reading Work Laws and Your Pay Stub helps adults with low literacy skills or English as a second language learn about the laws that relate to their pay, and increase their knowledge of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace in relation to how they earn income. Individuals are encouraged to seek the support of an advisor or tutor to assist them in understanding the information within this resource. This publication, written at a Grade 4 reading level, will cover important topics such as

- What are the various ways to earn pay?
- What are the names and meanings of items found on a pay stub?
- How is pay calculated?
- What are the types of pay deductions and their rules?
- What are the forms of time off work and which ones are paid?
- What are the pay and notification rules when leaving a job?

Easy Reading Work Laws and Your Pay Stub: Help for Advisors is a complementary online resource to help advisors and tutors support their clients. It includes notes with expanded information on topics for discussion and links to readily available resources.

Other Easy Reading products that may be of interest are

- Easy Reading Job Profiles
- Easy Reading Job Profiles: Help for Career Advisors
- Easy Reading Work and You Book 1: Make Some Job Choices

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## alis.alberta.ca/occinfo

OCCinfo provides information on Alberta occupations and educational programs, including

- duties and working conditions
- educational and certification requirements
- employment outlook and advancement opportunities
- wage and salary ranges

This publication is available to download or order online at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

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## What you'll find in this book

This book will help you understand your pay stub. This book will also tell you about some of the work laws in Alberta. These laws say how you will be paid.

Your employer must follow these laws when paying you. These laws about work are called Employment Standards. Your advisor or tutor can help too.

Alberta's work laws can change. When they do, the Alberta government will help employers and workers learn about the new laws.

Pay stub:
Your pay must always come with a pay stub. The pay stub tells you how much money you get.

Your pay stub can be a piece of paper. Your pay stub can also be on your company's website. Your company will give you a secret password to read your online pay stub.

A pay stub is also called a pay slip.

TIP: Some words in
this book are in bold. For example, employer or advisor. You can look up these words in our Easy Reading Dictionary. Use a computer to find the dictionary at this website:
alis.alberta.ca/ERdictionary.
Some words in this book are in bold and in this colour. For example, pay stub. This book will tell you what these words mean.

## Work laws about your pay

Alberta has laws about work. These laws are called Employment Standards. These laws tell your employer the rules for how much money you get. These laws say what must be on your pay stub. For example

- your pay (earnings)
- your deductions (such as income tax)
- your overtime (extra work hours)
- your time off (such as vacations and holidays)

This book will explain these things.
You can ask your advisor or tutor for help. The Alberta government can also help you learn more. Look on page 39 for how to contact them.

What is an employer?
An employer pays people to do work.

- An employer can be a restaurant owner.
- An employer can be a group of gas stations.
- An employer can be a company that paints houses.

Who is a worker?
A worker (employee) is a person who is paid to work for an employer.

- A worker can be a cook in a restaurant.
- A worker can be a cashier at a gas station.
- A worker can be a painter.


## How you get paid

Getting paid is one of the best things about work. Employers can pay you cash. Or they can pay by cheque. They can also put the money in your bank account. This is called a direct deposit.

You and your employer must agree on your pay amount. You must agree before the job starts.

## What ways can you earn money?

You can earn your pay in different ways.

## Earn by the hour

The money you earn in an hour is called a wage. For example, Jo works at a farm. His wage is $\$ 17$ per hour.

## Earn by the week or month

The money you earn in a week or a month is called a salary. For example, Sara works in an office. She is paid a salary of $\$ 2,700$ per month.

## Earn by the piece

You can earn money for each piece of work you do. This is called piece work. If you do more work, you get more pay. For example, Tomas works in manufacturing. He builds baskets. He is paid by piece work. He makes $\$ 2$ for every basket he builds.

## Earn by commission

Do you sell things? You can earn money for each sale you make. This is called a commission. A commission is a small part or a $\%$ (per cent) of the value of what you sell. For example, Miriam sells cars. She earns $5 \%$ commission. Last week she sold a car for $\$ 10,000$. Her commission pay for the sale was $\$ 500$ ( $5 \%$ of $\$ 10,000$ ).

Your pay can change. You can be given a raise. Or sometimes your pay can be less. Employers who want to change how much they pay you must tell you first. They cannot change your pay until after the next payday.

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## Raise:

You may be a good worker. Or you may be working at the same place for a long time. Then your employer may give you more money. The extra money is called a raise.

## How much must you be paid?

Alberta has a minimum wage. The minimum wage is the same for everyone. Many employers pay more than the minimum wage.

## Minimum wage:

Write down the answer.
$\qquad$ baskets X \$ $\qquad$ for every basket $=\$$ $\qquad$ _.

Tomas would earn \$ $\qquad$ for the baskets he built this week.

But don't forget work laws about minimum wage. How much minimum wage would Tomas earn for the hours he worked this week?

Use the minimum wage you wrote above. Write down the answer.
$\qquad$ hours this week X \$ $\qquad$ per
hour at minimum wage $=\$$ $\qquad$ .

Tomas would earn \$ $\qquad$ at minimum wage this week.

Which amount is more? This is the amount that work laws say Tomas must be paid this week.

Check your answers on page 40. Did you get all the right answers? If not, ask your advisor or tutor.

Do you earn less than minimum wage? Talk to your employer. Or call the Employment Standards helpline. See page 39 for the phone number.

## How often should you get paid?

The Employment Standards Code has work laws about how often you get paid. How often you are paid is called a pay period.


Employers can decide how long a pay period is. It can be once a week. Or 2 times a month. Or once a month. But it cannot be longer than a month. And it cannot change.

When the pay period ends, you must be paid. Your employer has 10 days to pay you.

## EXAMPLE



This is Hala's work month. Hala's pay period is 2 weeks. She gets paid every 2 weeks on Friday.

This month, Hala's pay period starts on June 2 and ends on June 16. Hala's employer must pay her by June 26 .

## Learn what's on your pay stub

Employers must give you a pay stub after each pay period.

Pages 8 and 9 show an example pay stub and what the information means.

Your pay stub shows many things. It shows your earnings. The pay stub must also show you

- your pay period dates
- the number of regular hours you worked
- your rate of pay
- the number of overtime hours you worked
- your overtime rate
- your gross pay, which can include
- your overtime pay
- your time off with pay
- your holiday pay
- your vacation pay earned or vacation days taken
- your deductions, such as
- income tax
- Employment Insurance (EI)
- Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- union dues, benefits, or pension plans
- your net pay


## Earnings:

## A 7

This is another word for your pay.
Gross pay:
This is all the money you earn before you take away deductions. Your wages, holiday pay, overtime pay and vacation pay can all be part of your gross pay.

## Deductions:

This is the money that is taken away from each paycheque. For example, income tax.

## Net pay:

This is how much you earn after you pay your deductions. It is the pay you get to keep.

## Benefits:

These are programs an employer chooses to offer to its workers. For example, health or dental benefits. You do not have to take benefits. If you choose to take benefits, then you pay a deduction with each paycheque. See pages 17 and 18 for more details.

## Union dues:

Some workers belong to a union. If you are in a union, you must pay dues (money) to belong. You pay these dues as a deduction on every paycheque.

You'll learn more about pay stubs as you read this book. But for now, let's look at a simple pay stub. Answer the questions that come after the pay stub. You can ask your advisor or tutor for help.

## EXAMPLE

Jim works at a gas bar. He makes $\$ 16$ per hour. Jim gets paid every 2 weeks.

He gets a cheque from his employer. Jim gets a pay stub with his cheque.


| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $7{ }^{7}$ off | 8 <br> Thanks giving (off) |  | $\begin{array}{\|c} \hline 10 \\ 10 \\ \text { hours } \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{\|l\|} \hline 11 \\ 8 \\ 80 u r s \end{array}$ | $12$ <br> 6 hours | $\begin{array}{\|l\|} \hline 13 \\ \text { off } \end{array}$ |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 14 off |  | $\begin{array}{\|c} \hline 16 \\ 10 \\ \text { hours } \end{array}$ |  | $18$ <br> 8 hours | $\begin{array}{\|c} 19 \\ 6 \\ \text { hours } \end{array}$ | $20$ <br> 4 hours |

Here is one of Jim's pay stubs.

## Overtime:

The law says you can work up to 8 hours a day or up to 44 hours a week for regular pay. For most types of work, if you work longer, it is called overtime.

Some workers get paid more to work overtime hours. Their overtime pay will be at least 1.5 (one and a half) times their regular pay for those hours. Other workers get time off with pay instead of overtime pay. See pages 12-14 for more details.

## Time off with pay:

Sometimes workers who work overtime hours can choose to take paid time off work instead of being paid more. For example, if you work 5 hours overtime, you can work 7.5 hours less another day. But you must tell your employer first. See page 15 for more details.

## Vacation pay:

All workers earn vacation pay. It is a \% of your regular pay. You can get vacation pay with each paycheque. Or you can get it when you go on vacation. See pages 22 and 23 for more details.

Holiday pay:
Alberta has 9 general holidays. Some
Gross pay:
This is all the money you earn before you take away deductions. Your wages, holiday pay, overtime pay and vacation pay can all be part of your gross pay.

## Year to date (YTD):

YTD is how much of something on your pay stub (such as pay or deductions) has happened so far this year.


## Deductions:

This is the money that is taken away from each paycheque. For example, income tax.

## Income tax:

This is a deduction. You pay this with each paycheque. It is a \% of what you earn. Income tax pays for things like roads and police.

## Employment Insurance (EI):

This is a deduction. You pay this with each paycheque. It is a \% of your earnings. If you lose your job and it's not your fault, you can apply for El. You can also get EI for other reasons. For example, when you have a baby.

## Canada Pension Plan (CPP):

This is a deduction. You pay this with each paycheque. It is a \% of your earnings. CPP will help support you when you are older and retire (stop working). You will get some money each month.

## Pension:

A pension pays you money when you are older and stop working (retire). A little bit of pay is deducted on every paycheque for your pension. The Canada government has one you must pay into. It is called CPP. But some companies also have private pension plans that you can choose to pay for.

## Find the answers

Look at Jim's pay stub on pages 8 and 9. Use the pay stub to answer the questions.

1. What is the pay period for Jim's pay stub?
2. How much does he get paid per hour?
\$
3. How many regular hours did Jim work?
4. How many overtime hours (extra hours) did he work?
5. What is Jim's overtime pay?
\$
6. Did he get paid for any general holidays?
7. How much does Jim get to take home?
\$
Check your answers on page 40. Did you get all the right answers? If not, ask your advisor or tutor.

## TIPS ABOUT PAY STUBS

- Always write down the hours you worked. Keep track of your regular hours. Keep track of your overtime hours too. Write your hours down on a calendar. Or put them in your cell phone.
- Your pay stub may be with your paycheque. Keep the pay stub in a safe place.
- Pay stubs can be on paper or online. Employers must let you see and print your pay stubs.
- Employers may pay wages in cash, by cheque, or by direct deposit. But employers must always have a pay stub for you.
- Read your pay stub with care. Make sure you are paid the right amount. Talk to your employer if you have questions.
- Keep your pay stubs for a few years. You may need them. For example, your employer might go out of business and owe you money. You can complain to Employment Standards. They will need your pay stubs to help you get your money.


## Work laws about the money you earn

If you are paid by the hour, it is called a wage. Your wages are a part of your earnings.

You may have many questions about your wages. Here are some answers.

## What is not part of your wages?

Wages do not include some things. For example: tips and expenses.

## Tips:

You may get extra money from customers for doing a good job. This extra money is called a tip. You may be able to keep all of your tips. Or you may have to share your tips with your co-workers.

## Expenses:

These are costs you pay as part of doing your job. For example, you may need to drive your car while working. The cost of the gas is an expense. Some employers pay for your work expenses.

## EXAMPLE



Van works in a bar. He serves food and liquor. He makes the minimum wage. His wage is
\$ $\qquad$ per hour.

Customers leave tips for him too. He gets his wage plus tips. Van shares his tips with his co-workers.

## EXAMPLE



Cora works in a daycare centre. Cora's employer may ask Cora to buy snacks for the children. Cora uses her own money for the snacks. She keeps her receipt from the store.

This is an expense. Cora's employer pays her back for these snacks. It is not part of Cora's wages.

## What happens when you work extra hours?

Your employer may ask you to work extra hours. If you work more than 8 hours a day or more than 44 hours in that same week, then the extra hours are called overtime.


There are laws about overtime. Some workers get overtime pay.

Overtime pay must be at a rate of at least 1.5 times your regular wage rate, unless you and your employer agree to time off with pay instead. Some employers pay more.

## EXERCISE

Keiko works in a clothing store from Monday to Friday. She earns $\$ 17$ per hour. She usually works an 8-hour shift. The store pays any overtime hours at 1.5 times her regular pay.

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| off | $\begin{gathered} 10 \\ \text { hours } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 8 \\ \text { hours } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 8 \\ \text { hours } \end{gathered}$ | 8 hours | $\begin{gathered} 8 \\ \text { hours } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 4 \\ \text { hours } \end{gathered}$ |

Last Monday, Keiko worked 10 hours. She also worked 4 hours on Saturday.
Write down the answers.
Did Keiko work more than 8 hours on any of her shifts? $\qquad$
How many hours did Keiko work last week? $\qquad$
Monday: $\qquad$ hours + Tuesday: $\qquad$ hours + Wednesday: ____hours + Thursday: $\qquad$ hours

+ Friday: $\qquad$ hours + Saturday: $\qquad$ hours $=$ $\qquad$ total hours.

Keiko worked a total of $\qquad$ hours last week.

Is this more than 44 hours? $\qquad$
How much does Keiko earn for each hour of overtime?
\$ $\qquad$ per hour regular pay X 1.5 = \$ $\qquad$ per hour overtime pay.

Keiko earns \$ $\qquad$ for each hour of overtime.

How much will Keiko earn in overtime this week?
$\qquad$ in overtime hours X \$ $\qquad$ per hour of overtime = $\$$ $\qquad$
Keiko will earn \$ $\qquad$ in overtime this week.

Check your answers on page 40. Did you get all the right answers? If not, ask your advisor or tutor.

## EXERCISE

Mike works at a gas station 5 days a week. Most of the time he works a 6-hour shift.

Last Monday, Mike's employer asked him to work 8 hours. That
 Friday, Mike also had to work 9
hours. Mike got some overtime pay on his pay cheque.
Write down the answers.
Did Mike work more than 8 hours on any of his shifts? $\qquad$
How many hours did Mike work last week?
Monday: $\qquad$ hours + Tuesday: $\qquad$ hours + Wednesday: $\qquad$ hours + Thursday: $\qquad$ hours

+ Friday: $\qquad$ hours = $\qquad$ total hours.

Mike worked a total of $\qquad$ hours last week.

Is this more than 44 hours? $\qquad$
Should Mike get any overtime pay? $\qquad$ Why/why not?

Check your answers on page 40. Did you get all the right answers? If not, ask your advisor or tutor.

## What is time off with pay?

Some workers can choose to take time off with pay instead of getting overtime pay. For each hour of overtime, you can take an hour and a half off work. You will still be paid your regular wage.

You can bank (save) your extra hours for up to 6 months. You must use your extra hours
before 6 months are up. You can use these hours to leave work early or to take a longer break or holiday.

You and your employer must agree that you can take time off with pay. You must sign a paper that says you both agree. This is called an overtime agreement. If you do not sign the paper, you must get overtime pay.

## EXAMPLE



Gina works in a warehouse. She agreed not to take overtime pay. She signed a paper with her employer. Gina takes time off with pay.

Last week, Gina worked 44 regular hours and 4 hours of overtime. She gets 6 hours off
with pay (4 hours x 1.5). She will save the 6 extra hours.

Next month, Gina will take the 6 hours off and volunteer at her son's school. She will get those 6 hours off with pay. The pay will be her regular rate of pay.

## What is a 3 -hour minimum?

Sometimes, work may not be very busy. Your supervisor can ask you to leave early. You can be asked to go home even if you just started your shift.

But the law says there is a 3-hour minimum. It helps protect how much you earn for work that you showed up for.

## 3-hour minimum:

 You can be sent home from work early. For example, you could be sent home after only 2 hours. But you must be paid for 3 hours at minimum wage. Or paid for 2 hours at your regular wage. It depends on what is higher. You must be paid the higher amount.Some employees have a 2-hour minimum. Like school bus drivers. Or kids who are 13 to 15 years old working on a school day. Ask your advisor or tutor for more information.

## EXAMPLE



Adam works in a hotel. He earns \$17 per hour.

Last night, Adam went to work. After 2 hours, his supervisor told him to go home. The hotel was not busy.

How much was Adam paid?
Write down the answer.
Adam worked 2 hours. His regular pay would be \$ $\qquad$
3 hours of minimum wage would be \$ $\qquad$
Adam must be paid the higher amount. Which one is higher? \$ $\qquad$ -

## Work laws about the money taken from your paycheque

Employers must take some money out of your paycheque and send it to other places. These are called deductions.

The government gets some of your deductions. They pay for things people use. For example, roads, police, doctors, and pensions. You can have different government deductions:

- You can have a deduction for income tax.
- You can have a deduction for Employment Insurance (EI).
- You can have a deduction for Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

Money may also be taken from your paycheque because a judge says you owe money. The court sends a letter to your employer to deduct the money.

- You can have a deduction if you owe taxes from other years.
- You can have a deduction if you don't pay the child support you owe.
- You can have a deduction if someone sued you and you lost, and you didn't pay the money you owed.

Money will be taken from your pay if you belong to a union, because you will have a deduction for union dues.

Money may be taken from your paycheque because you may want some benefits your union or employer offers. A benefit may sometimes be called a plan.

Your employer may offer benefits that you want:

- You may want a deduction for medical or dental benefits.
- You may want a deduction for a private savings plan or pension plan.
- You may want a deduction for a life insurance plan.

There are many kinds of benefits and plans. Your employer decides whether to offer any. If more than one benefit is offered, it is called a benefit package.

You will pay for those benefits as deductions. Your employer might also help pay for some of the cost of a benefit. You and your employer must agree to these amounts. Then you must sign a paper to say it is okay to take this money from your pay.


Deanna works in an office. Her employer has health benefits. The workers don't have to take the health benefits. But Deanna wants them. She signs a paper to get the health benefits. Her employer will deduct the cost from her paycheque.

Employers can also deduct money for other things. These are things that cost your employer money. For example meals and a room to stay in.

You must agree that you owe money to your employer for these costs. You must sign a paper to say you agree. Often you sign this paper when you start the job.

Employers can not deduct money for clothes you wear for work (uniforms). You do not have to pay for uniforms.

## EXAMPLE



Bashir started work at Mary's restaurant this week. He makes \$16 an hour.

Mary gave Bashir a T-shirt to wear for a uniform when Bashir started. Bashir does not have to pay for this.

On 2 of the days he worked, Bashir did not pack a lunch. He ordered food from the menu instead. Each lunch cost \$4.00. Bashir wrote the cost each day on his timesheet. He signed his name to show he agreed to the deduction. Mary will deduct the cost from his paycheque.

Your employer cannot deduct money for mistakes or accidents. You do not need to pay for a mistake.


Ahmed made a mistake at work. He broke a tool. His employer told him to be more careful. Ahmed cannot be made to pay for a new tool.

## EXAMPLE

Priya works at a gas station. One night, a car left and did not pay for gas. Priya told her supervisor and called the police. Priya does not have to pay for the stolen gas.

## EXAMPLE



Grace is a cashier. Her co-workers sometimes use Grace's cash register. Grace has to count her cash at the end of the day. On some days, her total is less than it should be. This difference is called a shortage. Grace's employer cannot take the shortage from Grace’s pay

There are special rules about some deductions when you earn minimum wage. Ask your advisor or tutor for more information.

What deductions can you find on Jim's pay stub (pages 8 and 9)?

## Work laws about time off from work and your pay

It's good for you to have time off from work. You can rest or do other things. The time off can be short. For example, rest breaks or coffee breaks. Or the time off can be long.

For example, a maternity leave after a baby is born.

Alberta has laws for the different types of time off.

## What are the laws about rest breaks?

The law says you must have at least 30 minutes of rest for each 5 hours that you work. The rest break can be taken in 2 parts, but each part must be at least 15 minutes.

Sometimes rest breaks can't happen for a reason. The law allows the rest break rules to change for one of these special reasons:

- an accident happens or something needs to be done right away
- something not expected happens
- a written work agreement says breaks will happen differently
- it doesn’t make sense for you to take your break

Some employers pay you for rest breaks. But some do not. If your employer has rules about what you can do on your break (like not being allowed to leave), then you must be paid for your rest break. If you can't take your break, then you must be paid for it.

If the time of your shift changes you must get 24 hours' written notice. You must also be allowed 8 hours of rest between the shifts.

## EXAMPLE



Lee is a dishwasher. He works an 8-hour shift.

His employer tells him to take a 15 -minute break at lunchtime and a 15 -minute break in the afternoon. Lee's employer pays Lee for rest breaks.

## What are the laws about rest days?

You must get days off from work. There are rules to explain the number of days you get.

For example

- one day of rest in each work week

| SUN | MON TUE |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| work | work | work | work | work | work | off |
| SUN MON TUE WED THU | FRI | SAT |  |  |  |  |
| work | work | work | work | work | work | work |
| SUN MON TUE WED | THU | FRI | SAT |  |  |  |
| work | work | work | work | work | off | off |

- 3 days of rest in a row in a period of 3 work weeks in a row
- 4 days of rest in a row in a period of 4 work weeks in a row

Many employers give workers 2 days off in each work week.

Some jobs have different rules about rest. Talk to your advisor or tutor for more information.

## EXAMPLE



Amal works Tuesday to Sunday at a flower shop. She gets Mondays off. Sometimes her supervisor asks her to work on Monday too. If Amal works for 12 days in a row, she must get 2 days off. The 2 days must be in a row. For example, Monday and Tuesday.

## What are the laws about vacations?

You must have a rest from work. Some employers tell their workers when to take vacations. For example, teachers.

Other workers can choose the time for their vacation. They can take all their vacation time at once. Or they can take more small vacations.

You must tell your employer when you want your vacation. You may need to write a note. The employer has to agree to the dates before you are allowed to take them. You must use your vacation time each year within 12 months from when you earned it.

Vacations are different from holidays. You have to earn vacation time. The law says you must get a vacation after you work for one employer for 12 months. You earn your vacation during those 12 months. You also earn vacation pay.

## What is vacation pay?

Vacations and vacation pay grow if you stay at a company for a long time. Here are some examples of the work laws for vacations and vacation pay:

Workers get vacation pay in different ways. For example:

- Some workers get a bit of vacation pay on every paycheque. They can see the amount on their pay stub. These workers can save their vacation pay for their time off.
- Some workers do not get vacation pay on every paycheque. They tell their employer when they want their vacation. Then their employer gives them their vacation pay all at once. It is on the paycheque closest to their vacation time.

Some workers take all their vacation time at once. These workers get all their vacation pay at one time.

Some workers only take part of their vacation time at one time. They will only get part of their vacation pay at that time. For example, they may take only half their vacation time. Then they will get half their vacation pay at that time.

| Your work time | Your vacation time | Your vacation pay |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| After 1,2,3 or 4 years | 2 weeks | $4 \%$ of yearly pay |
| After 5 years | 3 weeks | $6 \%$ of yearly pay |

Note: Construction workers get at least 6\% vacation pay per year. But they may not get vacation time.


Warda works full time at a pet store. She gets $\$ 17$ per hour. She gets vacation pay on each paycheque.

Warda has worked for the store for one year. So she has earned a vacation. She must get at least 2 weeks off. Warda wants to take one week off in June and another week off in August. She tells her employer the dates. Her employer approves the dates.

Warda won't get paid during her vacation. She got her vacation pay on each paycheque.

## EXAMPLE

Abi works part time in a hotel. He is paid by the hour. He does not get his vacation pay on each paycheque.

Abi has worked for the hotel for one year. So he has earned a vacation. He must get at least 2 weeks off. He will be paid a total of 4\% of his last year's wages as vacation pay.

Abi wants to take one week off in March. He wants one more week off in July. He tells his employer the dates. The employer approves them. Abi will get half his vacation pay in March and the rest in July.


Miguel gets a monthly salary. He has worked at his job for one year. So he has earned a vacation. He must get at least 2 weeks off. He will also get his regular salary during those 2 weeks.

## What are the laws about holidays?

Alberta has 9 general holidays. Holidays are different from vacations. You don't have to earn a holiday. Many workers in Alberta get the holiday time off work. But some types of workers do not.

Here are Alberta's general holidays:

- New Year's Day - January 1
- Alberta Family Day - 3rd Monday in February
- Good Friday - Friday before Easter
- Victoria Day - Monday before May 25
- Canada Day - July 1, but if July 1 is a Sunday, then it's July 2
- Labour Day - 1st Monday in September
- Thanksgiving Day - 2nd Monday in October
- Remembrance Day - November 11
- Christmas Day - December 25

Many employers also decide to give workers other days as holidays. For example

- Easter Monday - 1st Monday after Easter
- Heritage Day - 1st Monday in August
- Boxing Day - December 26

If an employer decides to give workers other days as holidays, the same holiday work laws apply.

Some holidays happen on your normal working day. Then you get the day off. But you get paid for that day.

Some holidays can happen during your vacation. Then you get an extra day of vacation.


## What is holiday pay?

Some types of workers do not get a day off on these holidays. If you work on a general holiday, you may get extra pay. Ask your employer how you will get paid.

## What are the laws about time off to have a baby?



A new baby is a nice gift to a family. But when the baby arrives, it can be a busy time. Many workers can take time off from work when there is a new baby. There are 2 kinds of time off for this. One kind is called maternity leave. The other is called parental leave.

Most workers can take the leave if they have worked for one employer for at least 90 days. Some workers can take it sooner. Your advisor can tell you more. You can take this leave even if you only work part time.

Maternity leave is for the mother who is having the baby. Maternity leave is 16 weeks long. Maternity leave can begin before the birth. If the baby is being adopted, the birth mother can take maternity leave. Adopting parents can take parental leave.

Parental leave is 62 weeks long. It is for a parent of a baby. New parents can share this leave. For example, one parent can take 20 weeks. And the other parent can take 42 weeks. They can take this leave when they adopt a child too. You can start parental leave any time after the child is born or adopted. But you must finish before 78 weeks (one and a half years) from that date.

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

Your employer does not have to pay you if you take this leave. But you may be able to get money from your Employment Insurance (EI).

Do you have questions about time off with a new baby? Talk to your employer. Or ask about EI at a Service Canada Centre. See page 39 for the website.

## What are the laws about time off to care for someone who is dying?

Sometimes, the people you love get sick. They get so sick that they may soon die. You may want to be with them and help care for them.

You can take up to 27 weeks off work to care for a family member who is dying. This is called compassionate care leave. You can take it if you have worked for one employer for at least 90 days. You can take this leave even if you only work part time.

There are rules about who fits the meaning of a family member. Your advisor or tutor can help you find more information on this.

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.


## EXAMPLE

Hoa leaves to care for her dying mother on January 6. She uses 4 weeks in January and 4 weeks in June.

| January |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 |  |  |  |  |


| February |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| SUN | MON | tUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|  |  |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 |  |  |  |  |



## June

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

|  |  |  |  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |  |

Your employer does not have to pay you if you take this leave. But you may be able to get money from your Employment Insurance (EI).

Talk to your employer. Or ask about EI at a Service Canada Centre.

## What are the laws about time off to look after a very sick family member?

If a family member is very ill, you want to be there to help them get better.

You can take up to 16 weeks off to care for a very ill adult in your family. You can take up to 36 weeks off to care for a very ill child in your family. You must have worked for your employer at least 90 days to take this leave. Sick children must be under 18 . There are rules about who is a family member for this leave. You must get a medical certificate. Your advisor or tutor can tell you more.

Your employer does not have to pay you for this leave. But you may be able to get money from your Employment Insurance (EI).

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off or give you back your job when your leave is done.

## What are the laws about time off because a child is missing or has been killed?

No one ever wants to think about a child being taken, hurt or killed. Doing this is a terrible crime.

But sadly, crimes can happen. Sometimes a child is taken away or even dies because of someone breaking the law.

If you are the parent or guardian of a child that goes missing or has died, and it appears to be because of a crime, you can take a leave. You can take up to 52 weeks of leave if the child is missing. You can take up to 104 weeks of leave if the child dies because of a crime. Your employer does not have to pay you for this leave.

The child must be under 18 . You can be the parent, or someone who cares for this child. But you cannot be the one who is charged with the crime. Your advisor or tutor can tell you more.

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off or give you back your job when your leave is done.

## What are the laws about time off because of a death in the family?

When someone in your family dies, it is a sad time. There are also many things to take care of. It can be a busy time.

You can take up to 3 days of bereavement leave a year. if you have worked for your employer at least 90 days. Your employer does not need to pay you for this leave.

3 days is the total amount of leave given per year. You cannot take 3 days for each death in the family the same year.

## EXAMPLE

Yurgen's grandfather died in August. Yurgen took 2 days bereavement leave to travel and go to the funeral.

A few months later in October, Yurgen's nephew also died. Yurgen has 1 more day of bereavement leave he can take.


You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off.

## What are the laws about time off to escape from violence?

You or a person you care for may live with someone who is violent or hurtful. You may need time to find help and safety.

You can take up to 10 days a year for domestic violence leave, to find help for you or someone you care for. You need to have worked for your employer at least 90 days to take this leave. Your employer does not have to pay you for this leave.

The person you care for can be someone in your family, someone you are dating or someone you live with and look after. Your advisor or tutor can tell you more.

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off.

## What are the laws about time off for longterm illness or injury?

People sometimes get sick or injured. Often it only takes a few days to get better. But it can take much longer.

You can take up to 16 weeks of leave a year to get well after a long illness or injury. You need to have worked for your employer at least 90 days to take this leave.

You must get a medical certificate that says how long your doctor thinks it will take for you to recover. Your advisor or tutor can tell you more.

Your employer does not have to pay you for this leave. But you may be able to get money from your Employment Insurance (EI).

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off or give you back your job when your leave is done.

## What are the laws about time off for personal and family duties?

You may need to look after your health or the needs of your family during the work day. For example, you may need to visit the doctor. Or see your child's teacher.

You can take up to 5 days of leave a year to take care of your health or handle family duties. You don't have to take the whole day each time. You can take half a day if that is all you need.

## EXAMPLE

Kara had the flu last month. She stayed home for 2 days until she felt better.

Last week, Kara’s grandmother had a dentist appointment. Her grandmother doesn't drive, so Kara had to take her. Kara took half a day off work for this. Kara asked her employer first.

Kara still has 2 and a half days available to use, if she needs to.


You need to have worked for your employer at least 90 days to take this leave. Your employer does not have to pay you for this leave.


You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not have to give you the time off or give you back your job when your leave is done.

## What are the laws about time off to become a citizen?

Are you going to be a Canadian citizen? Good for you! Soon you can go to an event for this. At this event, you will promise (swear) to be a good citizen. You can take up to half a day from work for this event.

You can take the citizenship ceremony leave if you have worked for your employer at least 90 days. If you have worked for this employer for less than 90 days, you can still ask for this leave. But your employer does not need to give you the time off. Your employer does not need to pay you for this leave.

This leave is for you only. You can not take this leave to go watch someone else become a citizen.

You can go back to your job when you finish your leave. You cannot be fired for taking this leave.

You can get more information from Employment Standards. See page 39

## Work laws about leaving your job

Workers leave their jobs for different reasons. Some workers quit their jobs. Others are laid off. Some workers are fired from their jobs. When a job ends, it is sometimes called termination.


## Laid off:



You may lose your job because there is no work. It is not your fault. You are laid off or let go.

Sometimes, after a while, there is more work. You may be called back. This is a temporary layoff. A temporary layoff usually can not be longer than 60 days.

Fired:


Some workers lose their jobs because they did something wrong at work. For example, they stole money or hit someone.

Employers and workers must follow some rules when a job ends. This next section talks about those rules.

## What happens when you quit your job?

You may want to quit (leave) your job. What do you need to do?

Most workers must give notice in writing to their employer. After you give notice, then you must work to the end of the notice period. Your employer must keep paying you for working to the end of the notice period.

A 1.
Give notice:
To give notice means to tell or warn a person that you will do something. For example, you can give your employer a 2-week notice in writing that you want to leave your job.

That means you will leave your job in 2 weeks. The 2 -week time is your notice period.

## Notice period:

A 1
This is the time between when you give notice and when you do something. For example, you can give a 2-week notice that you will leave your job. The notice period is 2 weeks.

Here is an example of a 1-week notice:

March 17, 2017
Dear Mr. Jones:
I enjoyed working here. But my family and I are moving away. Friday, March 24, will be my last day of work.

Sincerely, Astur Ali

## How much notice must you give?

This depends on how long you worked at the company.

| Your <br> work time | Your <br> notice period |
| :---: | :---: |
| 90 days or less | You do not need <br> to give notice |
| More than <br> 90 days, but less <br> than 2 years | 1 week |
| 2 years or more | 2 weeks |

## EXAMPLES:

## No notice

Kareem decides to quit his job. He has worked at his job for 2 months. So he does not have to give notice. Kareem can stop working right away.

gives notice last day of work
Astur has worked at her job for 1.5 years. She decides to quit. She must give one week of notice.

Astur wants to stop working on March 28. So she gives her employer notice in writing on March 21. She will work her regular hours until March 28.

2 week's notice


Oki has worked at his job for 6 years. He decides to quit. He must give 2 weeks of notice.

Oki wants to stop working on May 16. So he gives his employer notice in writing on May 2.

TIP: Do you want to quit your job? Make sure you know the rules.

Call the Employment Standards helpline for information. See page 39.

## What happens when your employer lets you go?

Your employer must follow work laws when you are laid off or terminated.

Your employer must tell you in writing before you get laid off or are terminated. How much notice depends on how long you worked at the company. Look at the chart. Some employers give extra notice to their workers.


How much notice must employers give to temporarily lay you off?

| Your <br> work time | Your employer's <br> layoff notice |
| :---: | :---: |
| Less than 2 years | At least 1 week's <br> notice |
| 2 years or more | At least 1 week's <br> notice |

How much notice must employers give to terminate your job?

| Your work time | Your employer's notice |
| :---: | :---: |
| 90 days or less | No notice |
| More than <br> 90 days, but less than 2 years | At least 1 week's notice |
| 2 years or more but less than 4 years | At least 2 weeks’ notice |
| 4 years or more but less than 6 years | At least 4 weeks’ notice |
| 6 years or more but less than 8 years | At least 5 weeks' notice |
| 8 years or more but less than 10 years | At least 6 weeks’ notice |
| 10 years or more | At least 6 weeks’ notice |

Even if your layoff is temporary, you must get a notice in writing. Some types of work, like seasonal or casual work, do not have to give you notice.

For most types of work, if your layoff is not temporary, your employer must give you notice.

Sometimes a temporary layoff ends and you are not called back to work. Then you must get termination pay.

Workers get their regular earnings during the notice period. Workers often work until the end of the notice period.

Sometimes an employer asks a worker to stop working right away. But the employer must pay the worker's wages until the end of the notice period. This is called termination pay.

## EXAMPLE

Jan works at a coffee shop. One day, her employer says, "Sorry Jan. Business is slow. I have to let you go. Here is your notice."

Jan has worked at the coffee shop for 3 years. Her boss gives her 2 weeks of notice.

Jan's job will end in 2 weeks. She will work her regular hours for the notice period. Her last day of work is August 23.


Jan's last day of work

## EXAMPLE:

Matt works at a garage. He has worked there for one year.

One day, Matt's employer says, "I have too many workers. I don't have a job for you anymore. Here is your 1-week notice. I want you to leave today."

Matt will stop going into work right away. But he will receive his regular earnings for the notice period. These earnings may be called termination pay on Matt's pay stub.
notice from employer

end of notice period

## What happens when you get fired?

Sometimes workers are fired. The employer has to have just cause to fire a worker.

Just cause: This means the employer must have a good reason to fire a worker. The employer must have proof of that reason.

For example

- The worker stole money or tools.
- The worker hit or bullied another worker.
- The worker told secrets about the employer.
- The worker was often late for work.

For some problems, the employer must warn a worker about the problem. The warning must be in writing.

## EXAMPLE



Jun works in an office. She was late 5 times in May.

Her employer talked to Jun about the problem. He also gave her a warning letter each time she was late. He has copies of the letters. The last letter said "I will fire you if you are late one more time."

One week later, Jun slept in and was late for work. Her employer fired her. He had just cause.

If there is just cause, an employer does not have to give notice. They can just fire a worker. The worker must leave right away. They do not get any termination pay.

## Where to get help

You may have questions about work laws. Or you and your employer may not agree about work laws. You can ask your advisor or tutor. Or you can find answers here:

## Call the Employment Standards helpline

You can get more information from the Employment Standards helpline. It is part of the Alberta government.

You do not have to give your name or your employer's name when you call. Your call is confidential (secret).

You can call in Edmonton at 780-427-3731. If you live somewhere else in Alberta, you can call for free at 1-877-427-3731.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing with TTY, you can call in Edmonton at 780-427-9999. If you live somewhere else in Alberta, you can call for free at 1-800-232-7215.

If you are from another country and working in Alberta, you can call the Temporary Foreign Worker helpline. You can call in Edmonton at 780-644-9955. If you live somewhere else in Alberta, you can call for free at 1-877-944-9955.

You can also ask a question online. Go to alberta.ca/ESquestions.

# Contact an Alberta Works/Alberta Supports Centre 

You can get work information at an Alberta Works/Alberta Supports Centre. Call or email the Career Information Hotline to find a centre near you.

You can call in Edmonton at 780-422-4266. If you live somewhere else in Alberta, you can call for free at 1-800-661-3753.

You can send an email to hotline@alis.gov.ab.ca

## Go to a Service Canada Centre

You can get information about Employment Insurance (EI) at a Service Canada Centre.

To find a centre, go to servicecanada.gc.ca/offices

## Talk to other people

You can ask for help from other people too. For example, a teacher, a family member, or a settlement worker at an agency for immigrants.

## Answers to the questions:

## Tomas, page 4:

100 baskets x $\$ 2$ for every basket $=\$ 200$

Tomas would earn \$200 for the baskets he built this week.

Tomas would earn
$\$($ minimum wage x 22 hours).
The minimum wage amount is higher.

## Jim, page 10:

1. October 7 to October 20
2. $\$ 16.00$ per hour
3. 72
4.4
4. \$96.00
5. Yes
6. \$1,148.83

Van, page 11:
Van's wage is
\$(minimum wage).

## Keiko, page 13:

Yes, Keiko worked 2 hours more on Monday.

Monday = 10 hours;
Tuesday = 8 hours;
Wednesday $=8$ hours;
Thursday = 8 hours;
Friday = 8 hours;
Saturday $=4$ hours.
Total of 46 hours.
Keiko worked a total of 46 hours last week.

Yes, Keiko worked 2 hours more than 44 hours.

Keiko earns $\$ 17$ per hour x $1.5=\$ 25.50$ for each hour of overtime.

2 hours of overtime x $\$ 25.50$ per hour $=\$ 51$

Keiko will earn \$51 in overtime this week.

## Mike, page 14:

Yes, Mike worked 1 hour more than 8 hours on Friday.

Monday = 8 hours;
Tuesday = 6 hours;
Wednesday = 6 hours;
Thursday = 6 hours; Friday $=9$ hours.
Total of 35 hours.
Mike worked a total of 35 hours last week.

Yes, Mike gets 1 hour of overtime. He worked more than 8 hours on Friday.

## Adam, page 16:

Adam's regular pay for 2 hours would be \$34.

3 hours of minimum wage would be $\$$ (minimum wage x 3 hours).

The 3 hours of minimum wage is higher.

## Jim, page 19:

Jim has deductions for income tax, EI and CPP.

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## For copyright information, contact:

Alberta Community and Social Services Workplace and Career Planning

Telephone: 780-422-1794
Fax: 780-422-5319
Email: info@alis.gov.ab.ca

## Work Laws and Your Pay Stub

This book will help you understand the work laws about your pay. You will learn about important topics such as

- how much you must be paid
- how often you should be paid
- what the items on a pay stub mean
- earnings and deductions
- laws about breaks, time off, holidays and vacations
- different types of leave from work
- laws about leaving a job

You can ask your advisor or tutor to help you with this book.

