

Changes to temporary layoffs, group termination and variances took effect August 15

The Government of Alberta has passed the [Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act](#), which includes changes to employment standards rules that are intended to save employers time and money.

Changes to temporary layoffs, group termination and variances took effect August 15. Several other changes to employment standards rules take effect November 1.

[Temporary layoffs](#) not related to COVID-19 can now be 90 days total in a 120-day period (temporary layoffs due to COVID-19 can be a maximum of 180 days).

[Group termination](#) requirements are being simplified:

- Employers must give the Minister of Labour and Immigration written notice of at least four weeks if they intend to layoff 50 or more employees at the same location in a four-week period. If employers cannot provide four weeks' notice, they must provide notice as soon as possible.
- Employers are no longer required to give employees and unions notice of group termination, but employers must provide individual termination notice to employees.

More flexible rules for [Director's](#) and [Ministerial](#) variances and exemptions are now permanently in place:

- Individual employers, employer groups or associations can now apply for either a Director or Ministerial variance or exemption.
- Ministerial variances and exemptions no longer have to have an expiry date, and can be renewed.

Resources for employers

[Fact sheets](#) are available online to help employers understand the changes. You can also contact [Alberta Employment Standards](#) with questions about these changes.

Alberta Employment Standards will be offering free online webinars. The first set of webinars will cover the changes to temporary layoffs, group termination, and variances. Webinars covering employment standards changes taking effect on November 1 will also be available. More information on these webinars will be sent at a later date.

