
Regulation and Fee Changes Coming Into Force July 1, 2017

June 30, 2017 (TBC)

The following legislative and regulation changes will come into effect on July 1, 2017, listed alphabetically by responsible ministry:

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Rules under the Farm Implements Act are being amended to reflect the harmonization of the Canadian Standards Association and International Organization for Standardization standards to protect agricultural equipment operators from injuries caused by vehicle overturns or rollovers.

Ministry of the Attorney General [MAG to confirm if this should include MIA]

New provisions under the Election Act come into force, including:

- Requiring the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to create a provisional register for 16 and 17 year-olds, with the minimum age to vote remaining 18
- Allowing the CEO to redact information from the Permanent Register of Electors of Ontario (PREO) at the request of the elector, if they believe that sharing this information would endanger the life, health or security of the elector
- Requiring the PREO to contain a unique identifier for each elector that will be assigned by the CEO
- A new streamlined nomination, registration and endorsement process for candidates
- Limiting the type of information shared from PREO to names, unique identifiers and mailing and permanent addresses of the electors
- Requiring political parties to disclose a privacy policy that meets specific guidelines in order to receive a copy of the PREO
- Giving authority to the CEO to ensure registered political parties have access to all products containing elector information that are currently provided to candidates
- Requiring the CEO to provide a copy of the register of absentee electors with all mailing addresses redacted, to each registered party
- The authority to issue fines to multiple residence building owners and condominium corporations if canvassers are denied access to these buildings
- Helping voters get to the polls by standardizing advance voting location hours across all locations
- Following an election, ensuring the inspection of ballots and other documents only happens under order of a judge
- Allowing candidates or their representatives to receive strike-off data on polling day, and political parties to receive this information after the election.

Under the new provisions to the Election Finances Act, nomination contestants will be required to register to receive contributions and incur expenses, and to report on these activities. Nomination contestants will also be subject to a spending limit. There will also now be a limit on contributions to nomination contestants.

The Liquor License Act will be amended to revoke:

- The 60-day grace period to complete server training after first being employed or contracted with a licensed liquor delivery service or by a liquor sales licence holder
- The 60-day grace period to complete server training after first being employed or contracted with a licensed liquor delivery service in the French version of the general regulation.

There are amendments to regulations under the Courts of Justice Act, including:

- To help speed up the release of a will on deposit with the court, court staff will be able to release the will to the estate trustee and clarify the process to obtain the release of a will on deposit with the court where there are multiple estate trustees
- Clarifying and simplifying procedures in the Court of Appeal
- Removing the requirement to deliver reasons for decision and requiring that a panel of the Divisional Court, rather than a single judge of the Superior Court, determine the issue of leave to appeal temporary orders in the Divisional Court
- Requiring time estimates for oral arguments to be provided on judicial review applications and motions before the Divisional Court
- Changing the French translation of the term “panel (of the court)” to ensure accuracy
- Using gender neutral terminology where possible on 11 Family Law Rules to be consistent with the language used in the All Families are Equal Act.

Ministry of Children and Youth Services

A regulation under the Child and Family Services Act is being amended to reduce the financial burden on adoption agencies. This regulation change will eliminate the \$200 application fee that adoption agencies had to pay each year to become newly licensed adoption agencies or to renew their existing licences. Reducing the financial burden on adoption agencies means they can focus resources on what matters most — serving families and helping children and youth find forever homes. The equivalent fee of \$1,800 for intercountry adoption agencies that are licensed under the Intercountry Adoption Act will also be eliminated.

Ministry of Education

The Education Act is being amended to clarify costs and fees so that school boards can deliver before- and after-school programs for 6- to 12-year-olds.

Ministry of Energy

Net metering is a billing arrangement that allows customers to generate renewable energy onsite for their own use, and to receive bill credits for any surplus electricity sent to the grid. Ontario is making changes to a regulation under the Ontario Energy Board Act that will establish a consistent net metering program in the province by requiring electricity distributors to offer net metering to their customers upon request. The changes will:

- Continue to compensate generators on the same basis as they are charged for consumption of electricity as consumers (e.g., volumetric electricity charges)
- Simplify the description of the method used to calculate credits
- Require electricity distributors to carry forward positive bill credits for net-metered accounts for a consecutive 12-month period, extending the credit carryover period from 11 months to 12 months
- Remove the requirement that the equipment used to generate electricity be no greater than 500 kilowatts

- Allow the storage and remittance of electricity from the electricity distribution system and from a renewable energy system
- Allow participants with existing net metering agreements the option of entering into new agreements under the amended regulation.

A regulation under the Green Energy Act sets energy efficiency standards for a broad range of appliances and products that are sold or leased in Ontario. The changes to this regulation will address any inaccessible content on e-Laws – online access to official copies of Ontario’s statutes and regulations. Changes under this regulation will also extend the compliance date for walk-in freezers and walk-in coolers from June 5, 2017 to January 1, 2020, and for battery chargers from June 13, 2018 to July 1, 2019.

The Energy and Water Reporting and Benchmarking (EWRB) initiative was introduced to help building owners improve their building’s energy and water efficiency. EWRB is the review of a building’s energy and water performance to determine how it is changing over time in comparison to other similar buildings. Ontario is establishing a new regulation to clarify details such as whom, how, and when building owners are required to report their data to the government.

This summer, Ontario will lower electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all residential customers and as many as half a million small businesses and farms to provide significant rate relief and ensure greater fairness. Lower-income Ontarians and those living in eligible rural and northern communities will receive even greater reductions, as much as 40 to 50 per cent. As part of this plan, rate increases will be held to the rate of inflation for four years. These changes are the next step in the implementation of the Ontario’s Fair Hydro Plan, and would establish most of the necessary regulations under the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, Ontario Rebate for Electricity Consumers Act, 2016, and the Ontario Fair Hydro Plan Act, 2017:

Electricity bills

To support transparency and communicate the changes made under Ontario’s Fair Hydro Plan, electricity bills will:

- Include messaging related to the Fair Hydro Plan and its impact on invoices
- Include a descriptive bill insert – once every quarter within a specific 12-month period
- Include a "First Nations Delivery Credit" as a visible line item on invoices and demonstrate the associated savings for applicable consumers
- No longer include informational messaging about the Debt Retirement Charge on or with invoices
- Revoke the “8 percent provincial rebate” messaging requirements to free-up space on the bill and avoid confusion among consumers.

Electricity support programs

The regulations will define eligibility scope, reimbursement process for local distribution companies, reporting, record-keeping and auditing requirements for the following programs:

- Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) — enable the sharing of information between the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ontario Electricity Board to help streamline OESP enrollment for Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works recipients
- First Nations Delivery Credit — defines eligibility to include all residential First Nations customers on-reserve who will receive a 100 per cent credit of the delivery line on their monthly electricity bills, and facilitates the creation of a payment process to be funded by the government instead of by ratepayers

- Delivery Rate Protection (DRP) — establishes a mechanism for the Ontario Energy Board to calculate maximum monthly distribution charge for prescribed consumers
- Rural or Remote Rate Protection (RRRP) — this program, which helps to offset the higher costs to distribute electricity to Ontario residents who live in rural or remote locations, will now be funded by the government instead of ratepayers, and will provide for a fixed monthly credit of \$60.50.

Global Adjustment (GA)

To relieve the current burden on ratepayers and share electricity costs more fairly, a portion of the GA is being refinanced. Refinancing the GA would provide significant and immediate rate relief by spreading the cost of electricity investments over the expected lifecycle of the infrastructure that has been built. In the early years, a portion of the costs covered by the GA would be refinanced to reduce pressure on today's electricity ratepayers. In later years, the cost of refinancing would be recovered from ratepayers.

The regulations will support the required calculations related to refinancing of GA, including:

- Defining the roles and responsibilities of the Financial Services Manager and Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) in relation to the refinancing of GA
- Ensuring that IESO has the authority it needs to make the appropriate adjustments in the amounts it collects from local distributors and others, and that those distributors and others reflect those adjustments in the amounts they collect from consumers
- The required rate reductions for regulated rate consumers, and the adjustments that need to be made for those who are not regulated rate consumers
- The methodology for determining electricity rates and adjustments to GA costs after April 30, 2018
- The flow-through of rates and adjustments in circumstances involving unit sub-metering.

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

To improve the quality of drinking water in Ontario and ensure that Ontario remains a leader in drinking water protection, new amendments under the Safe Drinking Water Act will:

- Simplify the operator certification process for limited system operators and operators-in-training
- Simplify and provide greater clarity on reporting requirements and other housekeeping items
- Improve access to and require more timely reporting of all drinking water test results
- Enhance Ontario's drinking water quality standards by adding, removing, and adopting Health Canada's standards for certain contaminants
- Enhance lead sampling, flushing and filter requirements for schools, private schools and child care centres.

To help Ontario transition to the new waste-free Ontario framework, amendments to the Used Tire regulation under the Waste Diversion Transition Act will support closure of the Used Tires Program and the Ontario Tire Stewardship.

Ministry of Finance

Amendments to the Alcohol and Gaming Regulation and Public Protection Act will establish a tax on spirits sold at distillers' on-site stores that will replace the current LCBO mark-up and commission structure and improve margins for spirits manufacturers. An exemption for

promotional distribution of a specified annual amount will also be allowed. These changes will help distillers to attract new customers and grow their businesses.

The Budget Measures Act (Housing Price Stability and Ontario Seniors' Public Transit Tax Credit) includes a new Ontario Seniors' Public Transit Tax Credit that will help seniors use transit systems in all regions of the province. Starting July 1, 2017, the refundable credit will be equal to 15 per cent of a senior's eligible public transit costs for anyone aged 65 or older. The Ontario Seniors' Public Transit Tax Credit applies for the 2017 and subsequent tax years. However, for the 2017 taxation year only costs for the use of public transit services between July 1 and December 31 will be eligible for the credit.

The Budget Measures Act (Housing Price Stability and Ontario Seniors' Public Transit Tax Credit) will also implement a 15-per-cent Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST) on non-Canadian citizens, non-permanent residents and non-Canadian corporations buying residential properties in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The NRST — part of Ontario's new Fair Housing Plan — would help address unsustainable demand in the region, while ensuring Ontario continues to be a place that welcomes all new residents.

To increase efficiency, Ontario amended the Financial Services Commission of Ontario Act to give the Financial Services Tribunal the discretion of combining tribunal proceedings without requiring the consent of the parties to the proceedings. The amendment also allows the tribunal to treat evidence admitted in one proceeding as if it were also admitted in another proceeding heard at the same time, also without the consent of the parties.

Amendments under the Pension Benefits Act include:

- Allowing and prescribing when the Superintendent of Financial Services can issue a special order that would require an administrator of a defined benefit pension plan to file a new valuation report — this would provide the Superintendent with an expedited method of obtaining new information about the status of a pension plan
- Expand the current powers of the Superintendent of Financial Services that will require an administrator of a defined benefit pension plan to file a new valuation report if the assumptions and methods used in a previously filed report are inappropriate for the plan, regardless of whether the report was prepared according to accepted actuarial practice
- Provide sponsors with temporary relief from potential contribution increases while the government works to implement the new funding framework for defined benefit pension plans that will generally reduce sponsor contribution requirements to these plans
- Extend the existing solvency funding exemption for certain multi-employer pension plans, known as specified Ontario multi-employer pension plans, for an additional year. These temporary rules are set to expire on August 31, 2017. This will allow the necessary time to develop a permanent funding and regulatory framework for these pension plans.

Amendments to the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act will prescribe Manitoba as a “designated jurisdiction” with which Ontario can enter into an agreement respecting the regulation of multijurisdictional pooled registered pension plans.

Office of Francophone Affairs

Regulations under the French Language Services Act are being amended to partially designate Georgian Bay General Hospital and fully designate Centertown Community Health Centre Inc. [pending LRC approval on June 27] as French language services providers.

Ministry of Government and Consumer Services

Amendments to the Vintners Quality Alliance Act will create a new VQA wine category, which defines production and labelling standards for wines made from white or pink-skinned grapes.

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

The new Quality of Care Information Protection Act will come into force to replace the current act, with changes that increase transparency and maintain quality in Ontario's health care system. The updated act enables health care providers and other relevant parties to continue to have protected quality improvement discussions, including discussions about critical incidents, in order to help improve patient safety and ensure such incidents are not repeated in the future. At the same time, the updated act provides greater clarity for patients and families, including requirements that information from discussions following incidents is shared with them.

Regulations to this act, as well as the Public Hospitals Act are also coming into force, which are substantively similar to existing regulations, with the following improvements, which will:

- Clarify who is considered part of a Quality of Care Committee, which is the committee that a health facility would designate to review a critical incident
- Stipulate that certain administrative information about Quality of Care Committees is not protected by QCIPA
- Stipulate that the Canadian Blood Services and any agency designated to carry out quality management programs for labs and specimen collection centres may establish a Quality of Care Committee for the purposes of holding protected discussions about quality of care issues
- Require hospitals to disclose the cause of a critical incident, if known, to patients/representatives
- Require hospitals to share lessons learned with a person/organization (e.g. Health Quality Ontario) when directed for the purposes of conducting analyses and sharing information to support quality improvement activities.

A regulation under the Health Insurance Act will come into force to make it easier for people to renew their health cards and/or apply for OHIP, by allowing renewals/applications to be done online.

Regulations under both the Health Insurance Act and the Long-Term Care Homes Act have been amended to update the co-payment amount charged to hospital chronic care patients and long-term care home residents. The co-payments, which contribute to the cost of meals and accommodation, are increasing to reflect inflationary increases to the costs of providing food and accommodation. This change will happen each year on July 1st and this annual inflationary increase is consistent with previous years.

A regulation under the Homes for Special Care Act will come into force that will increase the amount Ontario pays to licensees that operate Homes for Special Care. Homes for Special Care provide room, board and assistance with daily living for tenants with serious mental illness across the province. This funding increase is a first step in modernizing the Homes for Special Care Program, to put a greater focus on independence and recovery, as committed to in Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update.

Ministry of Housing

Amendments to the Housing Services Act will exempt from the Land Transfer Tax (LTT) the transfer of two social housing projects and two affordable rental housing projects to other non-profit housing providers in their communities. This is consistent with the government's practice of allowing LTT exemptions to facilitate transfers of social and affordable housing from one non-profit housing provider to another.

Ministry of Infrastructure

Amendments to the Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation Act will allow Infrastructure Ontario to provide affordable long-term loans to eligible non-profit, social and co-operative housing providers for the renovation, construction or acquisition of housing units. This change supports Ontario's Fair Housing Plan, which introduces a comprehensive package of measures to help more people find homes that they can afford, increase supply, protect buyers and renters and bring stability to the real estate market.

Ministry of Labour

Amendments to the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act will change the composition of the Grievance Settlement Board, a provincial adjudicative agency that resolves grievance disputes involving Crown employers and unions. The amendments will establish a new model that includes a roster of mediator-arbitrators, as well as a chair and two alternate chairs. Currently, the board is composed of a chair and vice chairs appointed through Order-in-Council. The changes to the board structure are a balanced approach that will result in a more expedited and accountable grievance settlement process.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

After an extensive two-year consultation process, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs is:

- Amending the Greenbelt Act to add close to 10,000 hectares of land to the Greenbelt Area
- Making administrative changes to an existing regulation under the Places to Grow Act to support implementation of the updated Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Amendments to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act will protect water resources, address the impacts of excess soil movement, promote the government's climate change priorities, and better align infrastructure and land use planning.

In support of Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy:

- Amendments to the Development Charges Act will exempt secondary suites in new homes from development charges, making them less expensive to build
- Amendments to the Building Code Act will reduce the cost of building retirement homes and make it easier for Ontarians to build secondary suites in new homes.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

The ministry is making changes to the Crown Forests Sustainability Act to create more certainty for forestry operators by implementing three revised planning manuals. It is also updating the rules for operating aggregate pits in Crown Forests.

Updates to the Public Lands Act will prohibit camping on public lands if they are subject to a mining lease.

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

Tables in two mining act regulations are being made accessible to ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Ministry of Transportation

Beginning July 1, 2017, a number of changes to statutes and regulations under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) come into force:

- The definition of road-building machine will be amended to clearly distinguish between traditional road-building machines (slow moving vehicles used at construction sites) and vehicles that are designed to be driven on the highway. Road building machines are exempt from many obligations under the Highway Traffic Act, including registration. Vehicles that no longer meet the new definition will be subject to the same safety requirements and oversight as other commercial vehicles. The changes are intended to improve road safety and create a level economic playing field ensuring that all operators contribute their fair share of tax and licence plate fees.
- Amendments related to the registration and inspection of mobile cranes and concrete pumps to support compliance with new vehicle registration requirements.
- A five-year pilot will allow low-speed vehicles on roads with a speed limit of up to 50km/h, provided they meet federal standards and safety requirements and are permitted by municipalities. This pilot will encourage innovation in the automotive sector, and could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.
- To ensure drivers have the skills and knowledge needed to safely operate heavy trucks and tractor-trailers on Ontario's roads, drivers seeking a commercial Class A licence must complete mandatory entry-level training before attempting their Class A road test.

Treasury Board Secretariat [TBS to confirm if filed]

Regulations under the Public Service of Ontario Act are being amended to make minor changes to the list of public bodies and commission public bodies.

NEW FEES AND FEE INCREASES

Ministry of Transportation

MTO is updating the knowledge and road tests for all commercial class licences (Class A, B, C, D, E and F) to ensure new commercial drivers can demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to drive safely. Effective July 1, 2017 knowledge test fees will increase from \$15.75 to \$23.25 and road tests fees will increase from \$89.25 to \$96.75, to help recover the costs of updating the program.

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