

LEAVES

Employees can take certain unpaid leaves without being terminated, and may be eligible for Employment Insurance benefits.

Sick Leave: Nova Scotia only guarantees 3 unpaid sick days per year. Employers are allowed to ask for medical documentation from employees taking sick leave.

Maternity leave: Employees are entitled to 16 weeks of unpaid pregnancy leave. There is no minimum employment period to qualify.

Parental/Adoption/Child care leave: Employees are entitled to 61 weeks of unpaid parental leave if they also took 16 weeks of pregnancy leave. Parents who did not take a pregnancy leave can take up to 77 weeks for parental leave. There is no minimum employment period to qualify.

Compassionate/family medical leave: Employees who have worked for the same employer for min. 3 months can take 28 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a critically ill family member whose death is expected in the near future.

Domestic violence leave: Employees experiencing domestic violence who have worked for the same employer for min. 3 months may be entitled to max. 16 weeks of unpaid, continuous leave or up to 10 days per calendar year, taken in a row or broken up.

Bereavement leave: Employees are entitled to 5 unpaid days of work after the death of certain family members.

The Halifax Workers' Action Centre believes that Nova Scotia's labour standards are inadequate and unfair to workers.

We believe in organizing collectively to address workplace injustice.

**NEED HELP
UNDERSTANDING
YOUR RIGHTS?**

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**THE HALIFAX WORKERS'
ACTION CENTRE**

**your
basic
rights
at work**

The Halifax Workers' Action Centre offers free legal information to non-unionized, low-wage and marginalized workers in Nova Scotia.

SIGNING CONTRACTS

You cannot sign away your rights. If you sign a contract that has conditions below the minimum standards, your employer is breaking the law and the contract is unenforceable.

MINIMUM WAGE

In N.S., the minimum wage is \$13.35 per hour.

STATUTORY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

There are 6 public holidays in N.S: New Year's Day, Heritage Day, Good Friday, Canada Day, Labour Day, and Christmas Day. Special rules apply for Remembrance Day. Employees who work on stat. holidays must receive regular wages plus either pay and 1.5 x their regular wage or an alternative day off.

Employees are eligible for holiday pay if they have worked min. 15 of 30 calendar days before the holiday and worked their last shift the day before and the day after. Workers with irregular shifts and earnings have their holiday pay calculated using a set formula. If an employee qualifies for the holiday and is given the day off, the employer must pay a regular days' pay for that holiday.

TIPS

Servers are entitled to min. wage. There is no law preventing bosses from stealing tips.in N.S.

CALL-INS AND WAITING FOR WORK

The entire time an employee is required by employer to wait for work counts as time worked. The employee must be paid at least minimum wage for their time.

If an employee is called in outside of scheduled hours, the employer must pay them for at least 3 hours' wages at minimum wage.

VACATION TIME

Employees are entitled to 2 weeks of vacation per year if they have been employed for min. 12 months by the same employer. Those employed for at least 8 years with the same employer are entitled to 3 weeks of vacation per year. Employers must pay vacation worth at least 4% of their employee's gross wages. This increases to 6% at the start of the employee's 8th year of work.

OVERTIME

After 48 hours of work in a week, employees are entitled to 1.5 x their regular wage rate. A week is defined as a consistent 7-day period.

HOURS AND BREAKS

Employers must provide rest periods of min. 24 hours for every 7 days of work. Employees are entitled to a 30-min break every 5 hours. *Some exemptions to these rules exist.*

TERMINATION AND NOTICE PAY

Non-unionized employees who have worked for an employer for less than 10 years can be terminated without cause.

The notice employers are required to give ranges from 1 to 8 weeks, depending on the length of the employment relationship. If the employer doesn't provide notice, they have to give the equivalent pay in lieu. Special notice periods apply in the case of layoffs of groups of employees.

WHO IS COVERED?

Exemptions to some of these rules apply in industries like:

- construction workers
- farm workers
- domestic workers
- the fishing industry
- the logging and forestry industry

COMPLAINTS AND ENFORCEMENT

In Nova Scotia, employees have 6 months from the time of the labour standards violation to file a complaint. In some circumstances, Nova Scotia allows employees to file complaints anonymously.