

**Submission to Alberta Labour**  
**RE: Workplace Legislation Review**

**Presented by:**  
**The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)**

**Contact:**

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**April 18, 2017**



**Submission to Alberta Labour**  
**RE: Workplace Legislation Review**  
**April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO) is pleased to provide this submission in response to the recent call issued by Alberta Labour for the purpose of conducting a review of the Employment Standards Code and Labour Relations Code. With a membership base of 350 Alberta nonprofit organizations, CCVO works to strengthen nonprofits and charities and provides leadership on issues that have a broad impact on the charitable and nonprofit sector.

**BACKGROUND**

In March 2017, Alberta Labour launched a review of the Employment Standards Code and Labour Relations Code. During this review, they welcomed comments from Albertans on a series of recommendations to change the existing standards. Alberta Labour recommends changes to the standards for calculations of overtime and banked hours, employment insurance benefits, eligibility for job-protected leave, and eligibility for general holiday pay.

CCVO provides the following comments for your consideration. Our position is informed by our ongoing engagement with Human Resources professionals in the nonprofit sector on various issues, including the current review. As the Employment Standards Code is being reviewed for the first time since 1988, this is a topic of interest to many of our stakeholders.

**INPUT FOR CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE REVIEW**

1. **The nonprofit sector is diverse.** The organizations that comprise Alberta's nonprofit sector range in terms of their size and area of work. They are engaged in a wide range of activities and employment arrangements also vary according to organization size and type of work.

Nonprofits also vary widely in terms of their level of knowledge of regulatory requirements that affect them. While some organizations keep abreast of policy developments and participate in the policy making process (such as through this review), other organizations lack the capacity to keep up to date on public affairs. Alberta Labour should be aware of the diversity that exists within the sector, and sensitive to how the changes in the Employment Standards Code will affect organizations in an equally diverse way.

It is imperative that Alberta Labour take into consideration the range of experiences in the sector if new standards are adopted and implemented. As a result of the diversity in the sector, implications of new employment standards will vary considerably across the sector.

2. **Proposed changes to overtime standards and eligibility requirements for job-protected leaves are particular areas of challenge for nonprofit organizations.** These areas represent significant financial, human resource, operational practice impacts to organizations. In short, changes in these areas will increase the cost of staffing. According to the 2016 Annual Nonprofit Survey, 42% of



respondent organizations employ 1-10 staff.<sup>1</sup> Given the relatively small size of organizations in the sector, complying with new standards may make it difficult to structure work and schedule employees while maintaining service levels and program quality. If changes in the areas of overtime and job-protected leaves are adopted, many organizations will be required to undertake a serious review of their internal policies and operating practices to bring them in line with new standards. The timeline to comply with the new standards should reflect the realities of the pressures experienced by the sector.

- 3. Communication, education, and training about any changes in standards is essential.** In the past, nonprofits have found value in Alberta Labour's online resources available for employers. These resources should be updated if employment standards are adjusted to provide consistent, clear, and accurate information. In addition, government staff are an invaluable resource to employers. Given the impact of the proposed changes on nonprofit organizations, it is essential that Alberta Labour implements a robust information, communication, education, and training program to equip employers for compliance.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. If Alberta Labour implements the proposed changes to the existing Employment Standards Code and the Labour Relations Code, ample lead time for compliance with new standards is crucial. Many nonprofit organizations will be significantly affected by potential changes, and will need enough time to bring their own policies, procedures, and operating practices into compliance.
2. That Alberta Labour establish a robust education and training program to support nonprofit organizations adjust to new employment standards.

In closing, we thank you for your consideration. In planning the implementation of the amendments that result from this review, please consider CCVO as a resource and partner. I am also available, at your convenience, to respond to any questions you might have regarding this submission.

Sincerely,

Katherine van Kooy

President and CEO

cc: Randy Paquette, chair of CCVO Board of Directors  
Leslie Evans, chair of Public Policy and Government Relations Committee

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<sup>1</sup> CCVO, Annual Nonprofit Survey, 2016 <https://www.calgarycvo.org/2016-ab-nonprofit-survey/>