

Ontario announces public consultations on labour laws

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On February 17, 2015, the Ontario government announced that it will hold public consultations to examine the changing nature of the modern workplace. The consultations will focus on changing Ontario's labour laws, particularly the *Labour Relations Act, 1995* and the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, to protect workers and support business in the context of the following recent workplace trends:

- the increase in non-standard working relationships such as temporary jobs, part-time work, and self-employment;
- the rising prominence of the service sector;
- globalization and trade liberalization;
- accelerating technological change; and
- greater workplace diversity.

The government's announcement was accompanied by the appointment of two special advisors that will lead the consultations. C. Michael Mitchell, formerly of Sack Goldblatt Mitchell LLP, and the Honourable John C. Murray, a former justice of the Ontario Superior Court, will coordinate the consultations and then provide a written report with recommendations to the Minister of Labour. The public consultations are a component of the government's four-part economic plan which includes:

- investing in people's talents and skills;
- building new public infrastructure;
- creating a supportive environment for business; and
- building a secure savings plan for affordable retirement.

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