

WSIB Announces Financial Relief Package for Employers in Response to COVID-19

Date : April 6, 2020

As a part of the \$17 billion package included in Ontario's Action Plan, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board ("WSIB") package seeks to manage the impact of COVID-19 by providing relief for employer payments to the WSIB.

The financial relief package permits employers to defer the reporting and payment of premiums until August 31, 2020. This deferral is available to employers who report and pay monthly, quarterly or annually based on their insurable earnings. In terms of process, each customer reports and pays on the previous full month or quarter. For instance, March 31 reporting and payment obligations cover the period of February 1-29. Deferral is specifically available for the following payments:

- **Monthly:** March 31, April 30, May 31, June 30, July 31, Aug 31
- **Quarterly:** April 30, July 31
- **Annual:** April 30

It is important to note that the relief package also applies to Schedule 2 employers, which includes publicly funded organizations (municipalities, hospitals, school boards), self-funded organizations that are legislated by the province, as well as businesses who are involved in federally regulated industries. All payment obligations for Schedule 2 employers will be deferred until August 31, 2020.

There will be no accrual of interest on outstanding premium payments for Schedule 1 employers, nor will any penalties be charged during this six-month deferral period. Schedule 2 account balances will not accrue debit interest as part of the relief package. Participation in the financial relief package is not mandatory, and employers can continue to report and pay on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Employers can also report now and defer payment until later.

In Our View

The WSIB's financial relief package aims to support employers in this difficult time while protecting coverage for employees. The deferral of the reporting and payment of premiums will provide much needed flexibility to employers, allowing them to focus on other pressing issues that may be brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the unpredictability of the current situation may pose some challenges for employers as

well. Mainly, it is not yet clear whether the end date to the deferral will suffice to offer employers the required flexibility as the situation unfolds. The WSIB has indicated that it will provide further information as it becomes available on next steps for businesses that opt to participate in the financial relief package.

For further information or advice on your rights and obligations as an employer, please contact [Paul Lalonde](#) at [613-940-2759](#) or [Sébastien Huard](#) at [613-940-2744](#).