



Ontario's Minimum Wage Frozen At \$14 Per Hour

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As 2018 draws to a close, employers in Ontario will be turning their attention to the final wave of changes set to take place as a result of the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* (Bill 148). While many changes that we [previously discussed](#) will proceed as planned (despite the recent change in governments), the increase in the minimum wage from \$14 per hour to \$15 per hour will not go ahead, at least for the time being.

On September 26, 2018, Ontario Labour Minister Laurie Scott announced that a freeze on the provincial minimum wage (at the current rate of \$14 per hour) will occur instead of the scheduled increase which was previously set to take effect on January 1, 2019. While no comment was made on how long the freeze will last, Scott expanded on the announcement by saying that “the increase of 20 percent this year was a lot for businesses to absorb, so we’re putting a pause on the minimum wage.” Since the employment standards legislation currently in force includes the scheduled increase in the minimum wage, a “pause” will require legislative reform prior to January 1, 2019.

Employers should note that several other Bill 148 changes, including new scheduling and record keeping requirements, are still scheduled to take effect in the new year. For more information on these changes, please refer to our prior [commentary](#) on Bill 148, including [for unionized workplaces](#), and check back in with our blog as we monitor new developments.

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