

Ontario Government Introduces Violence and Harassment Bill

Bill 168, *An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace*, when it comes into effect on June 15, 2010, will significantly impact workplaces in Ontario.

Ontario lags other provinces in setting out parameters requiring employers to protect their people from workplace violence hazards, so “it’s about time,” say supporters.

Also, statistics indicate that workplace violence is on the rise. The Ministry of Labour reports that between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, inspectors visited 417 firms and issued 351 orders related to violence in the workplace. Surprised? Don’t be. It’s more prevalent than many employers think—making lack of awareness the biggest threat to employee safety.

The recession doesn’t help matters. In a Canada.com article, Kevin Kelloway, a workplace violence expert at St. Mary’s University in Halifax, pointed out that the economic crisis magnifies employee stress and misunderstandings, and makes people more prone to violence.

As those organizations who have already implemented effective programs for their companies can tell you, prevention is key. They’re tuned into clues and red flags that enable them to defuse potentially hazardous situations before harm is done. And they celebrate the peace of mind that comes from keeping employees safe. For these companies, workplace violence and harassment programs align with corporate values that put people first.

To that end, tune into new offerings designed to help you understand and comply with Bill 168 requirements. A management briefing, [Implications of Bill 168](#), will afford senior managers with critical, first-hand insights into the key issues and challenges of Bill 168—all from a lawyer’s perspective. A half-day workshop, [Preventing Violence and Harassment at Work](#), will help managers, health and safety professionals, supervisors, and others to develop practical, time-saving solutions for complying with Bill 168.

Or, visit our website www.iapa.ca and www.ossa.com to get more information about the Bill, its requirements, definitions of workplace violence and harassment, tips, and more.

Effective January 1, 2010, 12 of Ontario’s health and safety associations have amalgamated to form four new organizations. One of these newly amalgamated organizations comprises Far, Safety Association (FSA), Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA), and Ontario Service Safety Alliance (OSSA). This new organization brings more innovative and cost-effective health and safety solutions to firms across Ontario, including a workplace violence prevention program for your organization that aligns with Bill 168. For more information, contact:

IAPA at 1-800-406-4272

OSSA at 1-888-478-6772



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