Human Resources Legislative Update

Ontario Introduces Anti-Bullying Legislation

Date: December 1, 2011

On November 30, 2011, the Ontario government tabled Bill 13, the *Accepting Schools Act, 2011*, legislation intended to address the issue of bullying in schools. This Bill, if passed, would amend the *Education Act* to include, among other things:

- a definition of bullying;
- a requirement that school boards implement policies promoting positive school environments that are inclusive and accepting of all pupils, and promoting the prevention of bullying;
- the designation of the third week in November as “Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week”;
- the prevention of bullying in schools in the provincial code of conduct;
- a requirement that agreements between school boards and other persons or entities regarding the use of a school operated by the board adhere to standards consistent with the provincial code of conduct; and
- a provision to support pupils who want to establish or lead activities that promote gender equity, anti-racism, the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people with disabilities and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.