

## Human Resources Legislative Update

# Ontario Government Launches Workplace Education and Enforcement Campaigns to Ensure COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance

**Date:** November 20, 2020

On November 19, 2020, the [Ontario government announced](#) that it is launching a series of education and enforcement campaigns (“inspection blitzes”) to ensure Ontario businesses are taking the necessary steps for the safety of employees, consumers and the public in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaigns have been developed in consultation with local health units and in support of Ontario’s [COVID-19 Response Framework](#). The government states that this initiative is intended to assist the efforts of police, municipal by-law officers and public health inspectors in ensuring compliance with the province’s COVID-19 health and safety requirements.

The campaigns will be carried out in strategic locations and will last from a few days to several weeks, depending on local circumstances.

Visiting provincial offences officers will provide business owners with guidance on how to operate safely during the pandemic and comply with public health requirements under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#) (Act). Among other things, where applicable, they will request employers to produce their COVID-19 Safety Plans [for more information on the required contents of a COVID-19 Safety Plan, or which employers are required to develop one, see our *FTR Now* of November 11, 2020 [Adjusting to Ontario’s New Colour-Coded COVID-19 Zones](#)].

Note that the officers are also responsible for enforcement under the Act. Persons or businesses found not to be in compliance with the orders under the Act could be fined \$750 through the issuance of a ticket. Where convicted after prosecution without issuing a ticket, individuals could be fined up to \$100,000, and directors and officers of a corporation could be fined up to \$500,000. The maximum fine for a corporation convicted of an offence under the Act is \$10,000,000. Any individual convicted of an offence under the Act could also receive a term of imprisonment of up to one year.