Human Resources Legislative Update

Federal Government Announces Temporary Waiver of EI Waiting Period

Date: February 1, 2021

On January 29, 2021, the federal government announced that it will be amending the Employment Insurance (EI) regulations to temporarily waive the one-week waiting period for EI claimants who establish a new claim between January 31, 2021 and September 25, 2021. This change is in response to the ongoing restrictions on businesses arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic that are affecting employment.

The one-week waiting period had previously been waived for EI sickness benefit claims made on and after September 27, 2020 for one year. This waiver applies to claims for not only regular EI benefits but also fishing and other special EI benefits (such as maternity and parental EI benefits).

The waiver of the waiting period will not change the total number of weeks of EI benefits to which an individual is entitled. This development could have implications for employers offering SUB plans or maternity and parental EI top-up plans.

We are monitoring for the release of the regulations and will provide further communication once those become available.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact a member of our Pension, Benefits and Executive Compensation Group.