

New Statutory Holiday - Family Day - February 18

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With the re-election of the Liberal Party last Fall, Premier McGuinty quickly fulfilled one of his party's election promises, a new statutory holiday on the third Monday of every February. This year's holiday falls on February 18, 2008 (which coincides with President's Day in the USA). This means that there are now nine statutory holidays for provincially regulated employers. There are a few choices for employers:

1. If an employer already gives employees nine paid days off, (i.e. the first Monday in August for the Civic Holiday) the employer can give the employees the day off in February and take away the day off in August.
2. If the above applies, but the employees prefer the day off in the summer rather than the winter, the employees can agree in writing to work on February 18 and take August 4, 2008 as their day off with pay instead.
3. The employer can add Family Day and still allow time off for the Civic holiday but advise that it would be an unpaid day off.
4. The employer can simply add Family Day and increase the number of paid days off each year to ten.

If an employer decides on option #1 or #3, it should put the employees on notice that it will not pay for the civic holiday any more when it announces the new Family holiday. If an employer elects #2, it will have to get the employees to sign a letter outlining their agreement to switch the day off.