



A Guide for Employers

Citizenship Ceremony Leave

Alberta

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Managing Citizenship Ceremony Leave

This employer guide explores the basics of the new Citizenship Ceremony Leave to help you avoid common pitfalls. How do you manage absence in the workplace? Have you prepared or updated your leave policy?

Managing leaves of absence in the workplace helps support your business growth and strong organizational culture. As of January 1st, 2018, Alberta's labour laws regarding employee management have changed to include a new job-protected Citizenship Ceremony Leave.

It is important to understand what rights your employees have and to establish an appropriate Citizenship Ceremony Leave policy reflecting your business practices. Use this resource guide to gain a better understanding of Alberta's labour laws for job-protected leave and apply our HR best practices to your business.



As an employer in Alberta, you must provide a half-day of unpaid job-protected Citizenship Ceremony Leave to employees acquiring Canadian citizenship.

Understanding Citizenship Ceremony Leave

All employees, regardless of the size of the business and whether they work full-time or part-time hours, are entitled to Citizenship Ceremony Leave if they have been employed with the same employer for at least 90 days. This leave is granted only once in a lifetime – when an employee is receiving a certificate of Canadian citizenship. Employers are not required to pay employees during their absence, but they may choose to do so.

What if the employee fails to notify the employer?

Employees must give reasonable notice to their employers if they intend to take this leave. However, if an employee fails to notify their employer of their Citizenship Ceremony Leave, they do not lose their right to take it.

An employer may choose to discipline an employee who failed to give notice when they were able to do so. However, they must make it clear that the penalization is for failing to give notice, not for taking leave.

Do you have a Citizenship Ceremony Leave policy in place?

Managing Citizenship Ceremony Leave starts with proper workplace policies, which are key to effective absence management. You can set your expectations

in an employment contract or employee handbook.

To prepare an effective Citizenship Ceremony Leave policy, consider these five HR best practices:

1. Review the Employment Standards Code to ensure you meet the minimum requirements of the current law.
2. Be transparent about time off and whether pay is provided during a Citizenship Ceremony Leave.
3. Set out notice requirements to avoid miscommunication.
4. Outline procedures for recording absences.

Managing Citizenship Ceremony Leave

As an employer, it is important to know your obligations under the Employment Standards Code.

Knowing the right steps to take when staff requests Citizenship Ceremony Leave will enable you to operate your business with confidence.

Are you noticing an increase in employee absences? It is always a good idea to check in with them. You should also make sure your employee handbook is up to date with new policies and procedures as labour laws continue to change.

Learn More

If you have questions about the Ministry of Labour or the Employment Standards Code, call Peninsula today. We are dedicated to providing small business owners with HR support.

1 (833) 247-2652

We've got you covered.

Employer FAQs

What are employers asking about Citizenship Ceremony leave?

1. What is the definition of Citizenship Ceremony Leave?

Citizenship Ceremony Leave is a job-protected leave that gives employees the right to take time off to attend their Canadian citizenship ceremony.

2. How much time can an employee take for Citizenship Ceremony Leave?

Employees are entitled to a half-day of job-protected Citizenship Ceremony Leave once in a lifetime.

3. Do employers have to pay for Citizenship Ceremony Leave?

No, the leave is unpaid.

4. Can an employee take more than a half-day of Citizenship Ceremony Leave?

Yes, but this is at the discretion of the employer. The Employment Standards Code only requires the employer to give a half-day of leave.

5. Can an employee take Citizenship Ceremony Leave for another family member's ceremony?

No.

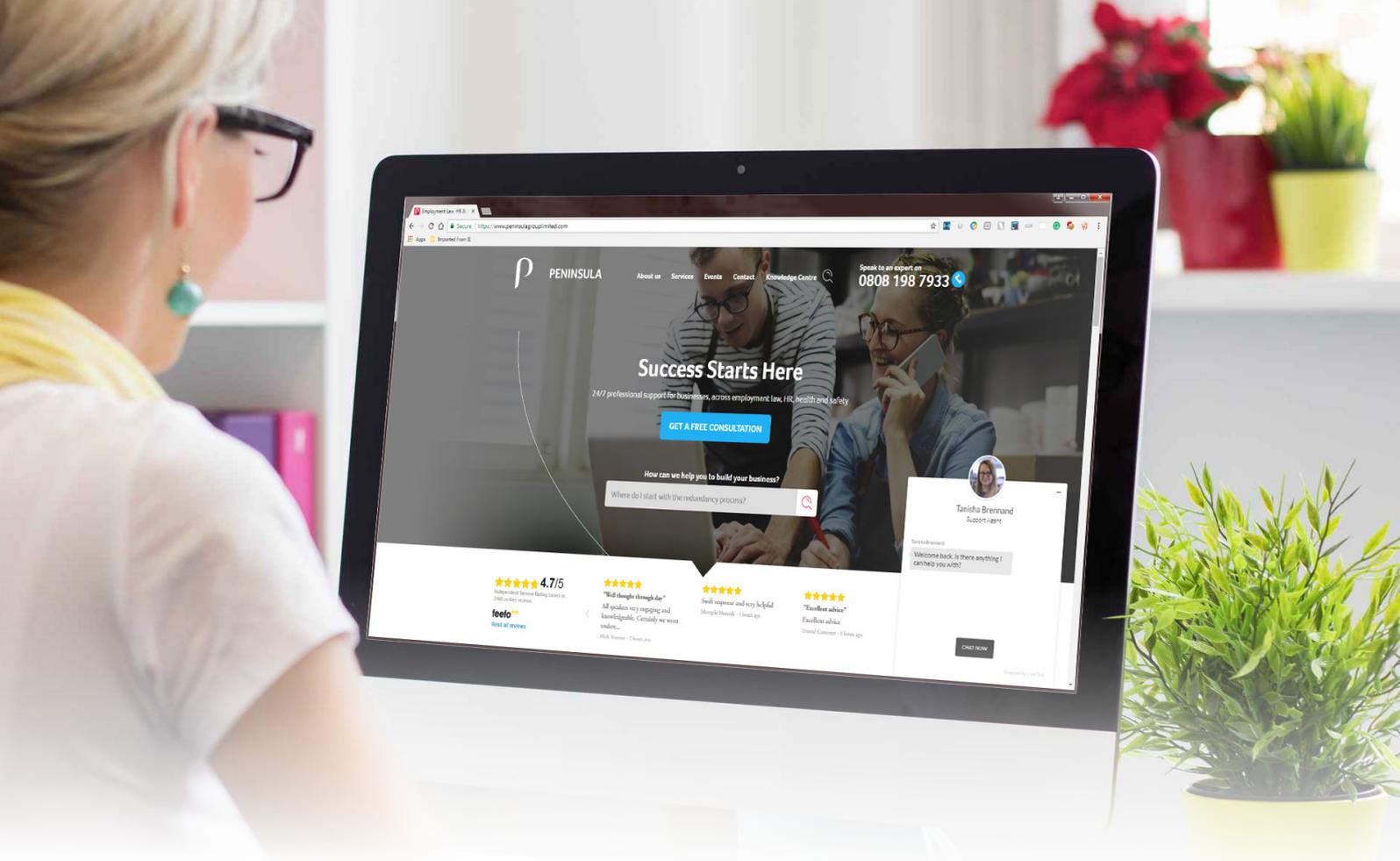
6. If an employee starts working part way through the year, how much Citizenship Ceremony Leave do they get?

All employees are entitled to a half-day of leave once in a lifetime if they have been employed with the same employer for at least 90 days.

7. Do employees need to request Citizenship Ceremony Leave from their employer?

Yes. Employees must tell their employers if they are taking Citizenship Ceremony Leave before or right after they start the leave. However, if they don't, they do not lose their right to take it.

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