



**CLEO**

Community Legal Education Ontario  
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

# OVERVIEW: YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK

## CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARK 5+

This activity kit is designed to teach newcomers to Ontario in Adult ESL and LINC classes about their legal rights and responsibilities. It includes:

<u>Introductory notes for instructors</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Activities for learners</u>	<u>2-6</u>
<u>Teaching notes with answer keys and suggestions for using the kit</u>	<u>7-10</u>

Visit [cleoconnect.ca](https://cleoconnect.ca) to download these pages and to find other legal information.

Visit [stepstojustice.ca](https://stepstojustice.ca) for step-by-step information about common legal problems, including employment law issues.




# OVERVIEW: YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK

## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

### Context outcomes

Get an overview of workers' rights.  
Learn what kind of help is available and how to access it.

### CLB outcomes

-  Participate in a small group discussion.
-  Access and locate information in the booklet.
-  Demonstrate comprehension of a moderately complex text.

### Activities

Your rights at work

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Orientation to the booklet

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Your rights at work review: Focus on modals

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Vocabulary strategies: Using context

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### Free companion resource

#### *Your rights at work*

The information in this activity kit is based on the CLEO publication called *Your rights at work*. Read the publication before using the activity kit, and keep it on hand for reference as you guide learners through the activities. You can find it on CLEO's website at [www.cleo.on.ca](http://www.cleo.on.ca). To order free copies for your class, you can use the online **order form**.

### Please take note

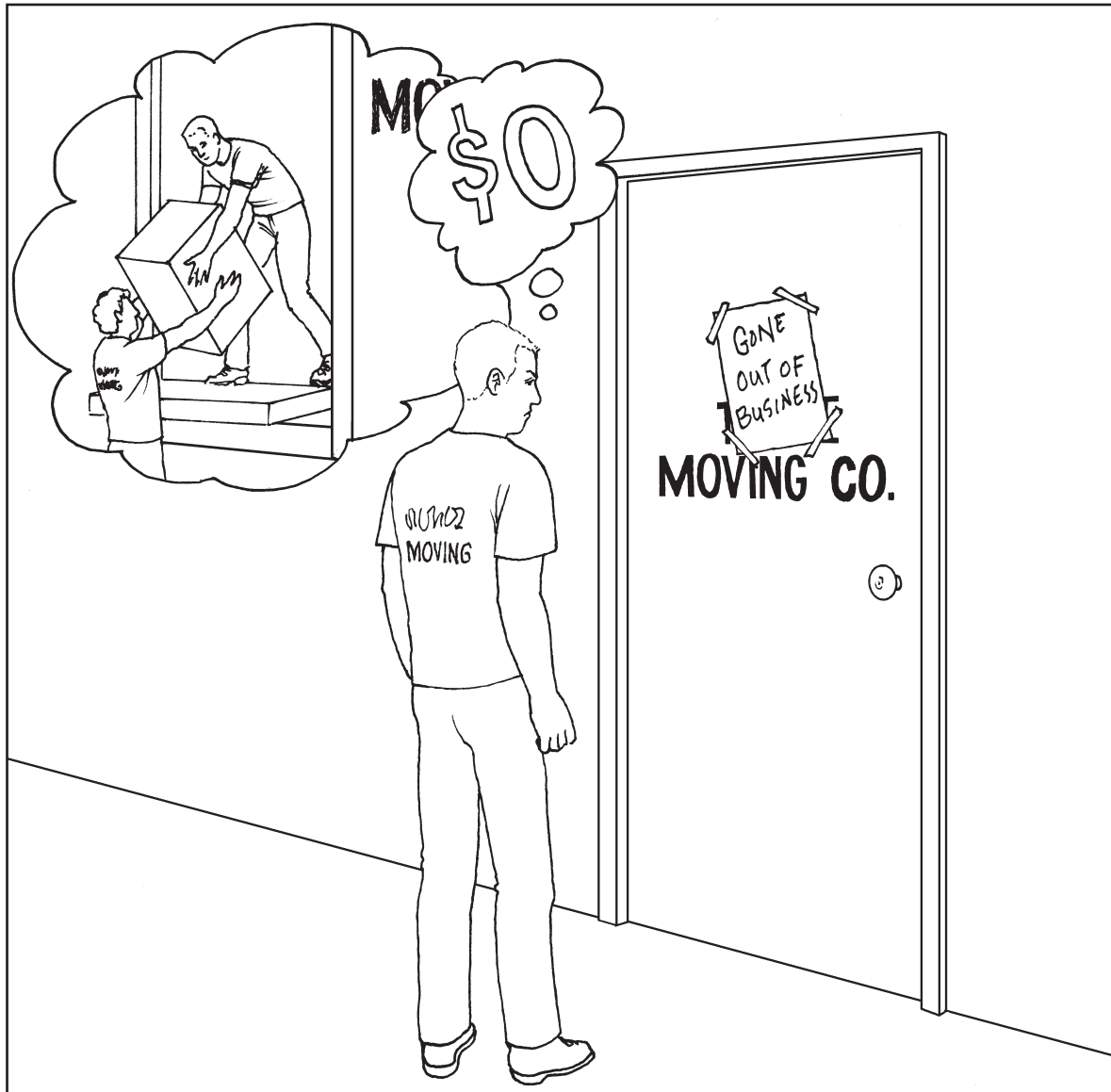
Ontario's *Employment Standards Act (ESA)* is a law that outlines the rights of employees and the responsibilities of employers. The *ESA* sets minimum standards for working conditions. Many employers offer better.

The information in these activities applies to most but not all workers. Not all jobs are covered by the *ESA*, and in some cases only parts of the *ESA* apply. Some industries, such as banks, airlines, trucking, and broadcasting, are regulated by the federal government.

Immigration status does not matter. You do not need to be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or holder of a work permit to be covered by the *ESA*.

The information in these activities is not a substitute for legal advice. Every situation is different so learners with concerns should get legal help. They can contact their local community legal clinic. To find the nearest community legal clinic, go to Legal Aid Ontario's website at [legallaid.on.ca/legal-clinics](http://legallaid.on.ca/legal-clinics) or call Legal Aid Ontario toll-free at 1-800-668-8258.

## Your rights at work



### Discuss these questions.

1. Describe what you see in the drawing. What do you think is happening?
2. Have you, or has someone you know, ever been in a situation similar to the one in the drawing? If so, explain what happened.
3. Imagine that the person is telling someone about his situation and together they try to figure out what his next step should be. Role play their conversation with another student.
4. Write a caption for the picture.

## Orientation to the booklet

Answer these questions about the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work*.

1. What kind of information is on the front cover of the booklet?
2. What does the acronym CLEO stand for? (see back cover)
3. Is reading the booklet a substitute for consulting a lawyer? Why or why not?
4. Where is the date of the booklet? Why is it important?
5. What is the Discard List?
6. How can people get more booklets?
7. Where can people find step-by-step information about common legal problems?
8. What is the first question in the booklet? Why is it important?
9. What is the last section of the booklet?
10. Which of these features does your booklet use? How do they help your understanding of the information in the booklet?
  - Section headings and subheadings
  - Page numbers
  - Colour
  - Bold type
  - Bullets
  - Italics
  - Information boxes
  - Charts / tables
  - Other:

## Your rights at work review: Focus on modals

- A. Modal verbs are frequently used when talking about rights and responsibilities. Brainstorm a list of the modal verbs you have encountered in *Your rights at work*. Discuss their use.
- B. Read the sentences based on information in the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work*. Fill in the blanks with the missing modals. Discuss your answers with another student. Then check the information in the booklet to confirm your answers.
1. In most jobs, your employer \_\_\_\_\_ say you have to work 8 hours a day.
  2. An employer \_\_\_\_\_ give one day off in each 7-day work week, or 2 consecutive days off in a 2-week period.
  3. In most jobs, you \_\_\_\_\_ be paid at least \$14.00 an hour.
  4. Your employer \_\_\_\_\_ ask you to sign an agreement with rules that are different than the general rules in the Employment Standards Act about overtime.
  5. You do not \_\_\_\_\_ sign an agreement that affects your rights as a worker.
  6. You \_\_\_\_\_ not be forced to follow rules that you did not understand or you did not agree to willingly.
  7. In most jobs, you \_\_\_\_\_ get at least one 30-minute break after every 5 hours of work. You do not \_\_\_\_\_ be paid for this break.
  8. Your employer \_\_\_\_\_ ask you to work on Christmas Day.
  9. Vacation pay \_\_\_\_\_ be at least 4% of the total wages you earned during your "entitlement year".
  10. You \_\_\_\_\_ be able to enforce your rights as a worker by making an employment standards claim against your employer.

## Vocabulary strategies: Using context

In this activity you'll focus on one section of the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work* and explore ways of learning unfamiliar vocabulary by using what you already know as well as clues from the context.

A compound word is a word composed of two or more words. "Immigration status" is an example of a compound noun. There are many compound nouns in the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work*.

**A. Scan a few pages of the booklet and find examples of compound nouns.**

**B. Read the answer to the question "What are my rights if I am protected by a union?" in the CLEO booklet.**

1. Underline all the compound nouns in the section.
2. Which of these compound nouns do you think are associated with labour unions? Write them below.


3. Two of the compound nouns above are explicitly defined in the section. Underline the definitions, and write them below. Compare the phrases used to signal the two definitions.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Making inferences:

You may be able to infer the definitions of some of the compound nouns.

You may:

- know what each word in the compound noun means individually
- be able to use the immediate context, such as the rest of the sentence, or the sentence immediately before or after, to help you guess
- be able to use information in another part of the text to help you guess

Without using a dictionary, try to write definitions for the rest of the compound nouns and fill in the chart below.

Compound noun	Your definition	Clues you used to help you write your definition

5. Compare your answers with another student. How did you figure out the definition? If there were some words you didn't know, which ones did you have more difficulty guessing? Why?
6. Check your answers in a dictionary.

## TEACHING NOTES

### Curriculum connections

#### LINC/Adult ESL:

Theme: Employment

Topic: Working in Canada

Theme: Canadian Law

Topic: Employment Law

Theme: Community & Government Services

Topic: Counselling & Advocacy

#### LINC 5-7:

Unit: Workplace Teams and Reporting Relationships

Unit: Resolving Conflicts

Unit: Policies, Procedures and Legislation

Unit: Presentations

### Your rights at work (page 2)

In pairs or small groups, learners can look at the picture and discuss the questions provided. You may wish to make one copy of the handout per group.

Put the following headings on chart paper and post them around the classroom.

Hours of work	Pay	Overtime
Breaks	Holidays	Vacations

Divide the class into groups and assign one topic to each group. The members of the group should discuss what they know about their topic, and write one sentence on the chart paper. After a few minutes, the groups should move to the next piece of chart paper, read what has already been written about the topic, and try to add another sentence. If groups are not able to add new information, they can formulate a question they have about the topic and write it on the chart paper. After the groups have visited each topic, go over the information and questions as a class, eliciting any further questions learners may have.

Distribute the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work*. Learners can work in their groups on the topic they were originally assigned, to check the accuracy of the information on the chart paper as well as to find answers to any questions about the topic. They can then present their findings to the rest of the class.

You may wish to ask learners to revisit the introductory drawing and apply the information they have learned to the situation depicted there.



Learners can brainstorm other examples of problems faced by workers. In pairs or small groups, they can choose a situation to role play. The role play should include information about where to get legal help.

Alternatively, learners could choose a situation and describe it in a letter or email to a friend. They could then exchange situations and respond to each other's letters or emails with advice.

This activity can also be completed using the "Employment and Work" section of CLEO's online resource Steps to Justice ([www.stepstojustice.ca](http://www.stepstojustice.ca)). Learners may find the "Next Steps" feature of the website particularly useful.

**Extensions:**

More advanced learners can select one of the popular questions on Steps to Justice ([www.stepstojustice.ca](http://www.stepstojustice.ca)) and use their findings to prepare a written report or to make an oral presentation.

Instructor provides, or learners access, the Ministry of Labour's Employment Standards Claim Form. This form is available at a ServiceOntario Centre or on the Ministry of Labour website at [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca).

**Orientation to  
the booklet  
(page 3)**

Before or after the group work, you may wish to use **Orientation to the booklet** as a guide to highlight the main content and helpful features of the booklet. You can use it for your reference in guiding a class discussion, or you can hand out **Orientation to the booklet** to learners. The questions can help learners develop reading strategies that enhance their comprehension by helping them get a sense of the organization and main thrust of the text.

**Your rights at work  
review:  
Focus on modals  
(page 4)**

This activity provides an opportunity for learners to review information about workers' rights while drawing their attention to the frequent use of modal verbs in this context. You may wish to have learners go through a few sections of the CLEO booklet *Your rights at work*, identify the modal verbs, and discuss their use. Please note that, in this context, the modal verb "can" is stronger than "be able to". It means "have the right to" or "be allowed to".

**Answers:**

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>can</i>                     | 2. <i>has to / must</i>       |
| 3. <i>must / have to</i>          | 4. <i>might / may / could</i> |
| 5. <i>have to</i>                 | 6. <i>should</i>              |
| 7. <i>must / have to; have to</i> | 8. <i>can</i>                 |
| 9. <i>must / has to</i>           | 10. <i>may / might</i>        |

**Vocabulary strategies:  
Using context  
(pages 5-6)**

This activity encourages vocabulary development as well as the skills of scanning and reading for detail. You may wish to do the scanning activity as a whole class. After reading the section “What are my rights if I am protected by a union?”, learners can work independently or with a partner to answer the questions. You may want to take up 1 through 3 before learners work on 4.

Learners can compare their answers to 4 with another student and discuss how they arrived at the definitions. They can compare notes about which compound nouns, if any, they had more difficulty guessing, and why. They can then check their answers in a dictionary and look up any remaining words. Take up as a class to ensure correct answers.

**Extension:**

As a class, you can brainstorm other words and phrases, including other compound nouns, associated with unions.

**Answers:****B.**

1. *collective agreement*  
*union representative*  
*grievance procedure*  
*labour union*  
*overtime pay*  
*collective bargaining*  
*Canadian Labour Congress*  
*Ontario Region*

2. *collective agreement*  
*union representative*  
*grievance procedure*  
*labour union*  
*collective bargaining*  
*Canadian Labour Congress*
3. a. **Labour union** is defined as an organization of workers that bargains with employers to set conditions of employment.  
  
b. **Collective bargaining** is explicitly defined in the second paragraph as the process of bargaining between employers and an organization of workers to set conditions of employment such as wages, hours of work, and overtime pay.
4. Learners may be able to infer the definition of **collective agreement** from the definition of “collective bargaining” provided in the text, as well as from their knowledge of the individual words.  
  
*Learners may be able to infer the definition of grievance procedure from the rest of the sentence.*  
  
*Learners may be able to infer the definition of Canadian Labour Congress if they know the meaning of the individual words, as well as from the context.*

CLEO’s **Steps to Justice** is a website that gives step-by-step information about common legal problems, including employment law issues. Steps to Justice has practical tools like forms and checklists, and referral information for legal and social services. Visit [www.stepstojustice.ca](http://www.stepstojustice.ca) and see the information in the Employment and Work section.