



**CLEO**

Community Legal Education Ontario  
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

# LAWS ABOUT PAY

## CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARK 2

This activity kit, designed to teach newcomers to Ontario in Adult ESL and LINC classes about their legal rights and responsibilities, 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>7-8</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.

# LAWS ABOUT PAY

## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

**Context outcomes** Understand that workers have a right to be paid minimum wage and that it is different for different kinds of work.  
Understand what deductions and vacation pay are.

**CLB outcomes**

-  Get information from very basic texts.
-  Get information from a simplified pay stub.

**Activities** Minimum wage: Four workers

Diego's pay stub

Vacation pay

**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.

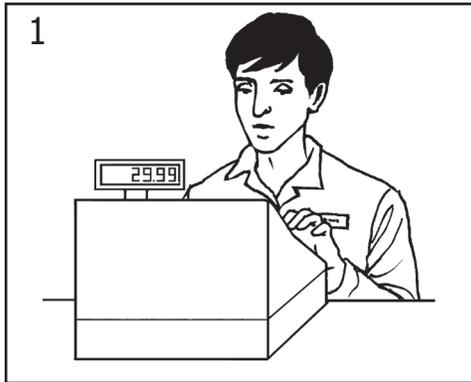
Immigration status does not matter. You do not need to be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or holder of a work permit to be covered by the *ESA*.

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 [legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics](http://legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics) or call Legal Aid Ontario toll-free at 1-800-668-8258.

## Minimum wage: Four workers

Most workers have the right to a minimum wage. It is not legal for an employer to pay a wage that is below minimum wage.

### A. Match the pictures and the descriptions.



- \_\_\_ a. Diego is a cleaner. He works in an office building. His wage is \$17.60 an hour. This is general minimum wage.
- \_\_\_ b. Sanjeev is a cashier in a store. He is 17 years old. He is a student. He works part-time. His wage is \$16.60 an hour. This is minimum wage for most students under 18 years old.
- \_\_\_ c. Aster is a waiter in a restaurant. She serves alcohol. Her wage is \$17.60 an hour. Minimum wage for workers who serve alcohol is the same as general minimum wage.
- \_\_\_ d. Simy works at home. She sews dresses for a clothing company. Her wage is \$19.35 an hour. This is minimum wage for homeworkers.

**B. Fill in the chart about the four workers.**

Name	Job	Location	Wage

**C. Unscramble the words to make questions.**

1. job his is what? \_\_\_\_\_

2. much she how does make? \_\_\_\_\_

3. her what wage is? \_\_\_\_\_

4. where work he does? \_\_\_\_\_

5. do does he what? \_\_\_\_\_

Which questions have the same meaning? \_\_\_\_\_

**CI. Ask and answer questions about the four workers with another student.**

Example:

- How much does Diego make?
- He makes \$17.60 an hour.

**CII. Questions for discussion.**

1. What other kinds of work do homeworkers do?
2. Do workers in your home country have the right to a minimum wage?
3. What can you do if your wage is below minimum wage?

## Diego's pay stub

On or before your payday, your employer must give you a **statement of your wages**. This is often called a **pay stub**.

A. Read the information from Diego's pay stub.

<b>Name:</b>	Diego Romero		
<b>Pay period:</b>	November 17 to 30, 2025		
<b>Rate of pay:</b>	\$17.60 an hour		
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Wages</b>	
Regular hours	<u>80</u>	<u>\$1,408.00</u>	
Total hours	80		
<b>Total wages</b>			<b>\$1,408.00</b>
		<b>Deductions</b>	
Income tax		\$268.22	
EI		\$22.95	
CPP		<u>\$69.70</u>	
<b>Total deductions</b>			<b>– <u>\$360.87</u></b>
			<b>\$1,047.13</b>

B. What deductions are on Diego's pay stub? Use the checklist.

- Income tax
- Employment Insurance
- Canada Pension Plan

**C. Comprehension: Answer the questions about Diego’s pay stub.**

- 1. What is Diego’s last name? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. What is the pay period? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. How long is the pay period? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What is his rate of pay? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Does Diego make an hourly wage? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. How many hours did he work? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Does Diego work full-time? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. How much does Diego make after deductions? \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Do you have a job? Do you know someone who has a job?  
Fill in the chart.**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Job</b>	
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Wage</b>	

**Use the information in the chart to write a story.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Vacation pay

Many workers get vacation pay on their pay cheque.

Sanjeev gets vacation pay on every pay cheque. His vacation pay is 4% of his regular wages. He can take two weeks of vacation every year. He gets his vacation time off with no pay.

Here is part of Sanjeev's pay stub.

<b>Name:</b>	Sanjeev Kumar	
<b>Pay period:</b>	November 17 to 30, 2025	
<b>Rate of pay:</b>	\$16.60 an hour	
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Wages</b>
Regular hours	<u>30</u>	\$498.00
Total hours	30	
Vacation pay (4% of wages)		<u>\$19.92</u>
<b>Total wages</b>		<b>\$517.92</b>

### A. Correct these sentences about the pay stub.

1. Sanjeev gets paid every month. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sanjeev's wage is \$16.60 a week. \_\_\_\_\_

3. He works 30 hours a week. \_\_\_\_\_

4. He works full-time. \_\_\_\_\_

5. He doesn't get vacation pay. \_\_\_\_\_

6. His vacation pay is \$16.60 an hour. \_\_\_\_\_

## 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

### Vocabulary

law, legal, wage, minimum wage, hour, above, below, part-time, student, cleaner, waiter, homemaker, alcohol, dresses, work, serve, sew, get, pay, pay stub, pay period, rate of pay, wages, total, deductions, income tax, EI / Employment Insurance, CPP / Canada Pension Plan

### Minimum wage: Four workers (pages 2-3)

Ask if any learners know what minimum wage is and why it is called minimum wage. You may wish to introduce the concept of “minimum” with a situation in which lower than minimum is not OK (for example: minimum height requirement to ride a roller coaster) or not legal (minimum drinking age, minimum driving age) and then explain that it is also not legal for an employer to pay less than minimum wage. Explain that minimum wage is set by the Ontario government, and may go up from time to time. Minimum wage rates and explanations of each category can be found at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/your-guide-employment-standards-act-0/minimum-wage>

#### Answers:

- A. 1. *b*    2. *c*    3. *d*    4. *a*  
B. (answers may be written in any order)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Job</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Wage</i>
<i>Diego</i>	<i>cleaner</i>	<i>office building</i>	<i>\$17.60 an hour</i>
<i>Sanjeev</i>	<i>cashier</i>	<i>store</i>	<i>\$16.60 an hour</i>
<i>Aster</i>	<i>waiter</i>	<i>restaurant</i>	<i>\$17.60 an hour</i>
<i>Simy</i>	<i>homeworker</i>	<i>home</i>	<i>\$19.35 an hour</i>

- C. 1. *What is his job?*  
 2. *How much does she make?*  
 3. *What is her wage?*  
 4. *Where does he work?*  
 5. *What does he do?*  
*1 and 5 have the same meaning.*  
*2 and 3 have the same meaning.*

E. Go over the questions for discussion as a whole class, to ensure comprehension. Learners can discuss in pairs or small groups. You may need to distinguish between homeworkers, who do paid work in their homes (other examples include stuffing envelopes and telemarketing), and domestic workers, who work in an employer’s home, usually as nannies or caregivers.

**Diego’s pay stub  
(pages 4-5)**

Explain what a pay stub (or statement of wages) is and that Diego’s employer must give him his pay stub on or before his payday. Stress the importance of keeping pay stubs and other records.

You may want to discuss different methods of payment, such as cash, cheque, and direct deposit. You may also want to point out that there are different pay periods and that a 2-week pay period is common for many kinds of work.

Elicit what learners know about deductions. You can also teach “deduct” and “subtract”.

**Answers:**

- C. 1. *Romero*      2. *November 17 to 30, 2025*  
 3. *2 weeks*      4. *\$17.60 an hour*      5. *Yes*  
 6. *80*      7. *Yes*      8. *\$1,047.13*

**Vacation pay**  
**(page 6)**

This activity introduces the concept of vacation pay. Most people are entitled to at least 2 weeks' vacation earned by working 12 months for the same employer.

**Answers:**

- A. 1. *Sanjeev gets paid every 2 weeks.*  
2. *Sanjeev's wage is \$16.60 an hour.*  
3. *He works 15 hours a week.*  
Or:  
*He works 30 hours every 2 weeks.*  
4. *He works part-time.*  
5. *He gets vacation pay.*  
6. *His vacation pay is \$19.92.*  
Or:  
*His vacation pay is 4% of his wages.*

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 [stepstojustice.ca](https://stepstojustice.ca) and see the information in the Employment and Work section.