

Your Rights at Work Taking Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave in Ontario

About This Guide

This guide explains your rights at work if you need time off because of domestic or sexual violence.

It covers:

- When you can take leave
- How much time you can take
- What to expect from your employer

This is general information, not legal advice.

What Domestic Or Sexual Violence Leave Is

[Domestic or Sexual Violence \(DSV\) Leave](#) is job-protected time off under Ontario law.

You can use it if:

- You are experiencing domestic or sexual violence
- Your child under 18 is experiencing it

You can use this time to stay safe, get care, or take next steps.

Who Can Use This Leave

You can take this leave if:

- You or your child under 18 has experienced, is experiencing, or has been threatened with domestic or sexual violence
- You have worked for your employer for at least 13 weeks

This applies to most workers, including full-time, part-time, permanent, and temporary employees.

You cannot use this leave if you are the person who caused the harm.

What You Can Use This Leave For

You can use this time to deal with the impacts of violence.

Examples:

- Get medical care or mental health support
- Talk to a counsellor or support worker
- Move to a safer place
- Meet with police or go to court
- Access community or victim services

How Much Time You Can Take

Each year, you can take:

- Up to 10 days
- Up to 15 weeks

You can:

- Take time all at once or in smaller parts
- Take part of a day (may count as a full day)
- Take part of a week (may count as a full week)

Will You Be Paid?

- The first 5 days each year are paid
- The rest of the leave is unpaid

Paid days are at your regular rate.

Your Job Is Protected

When you take this leave:

- Your employer cannot fire you or punish you

- Your hours, pay, or role cannot be reduced because of the leave
- You can return to your job after the leave

If your job no longer exists, you must be offered a similar job with the same pay.

Your Privacy and Safety

You have the right to protect your privacy.

- You do not need to share details about what happened
- You only need to say you are using DSV leave
- Your employer must keep your information confidential

You can also:

- Ask to be contacted in a way that is safe for you
- Use a private email or phone number

How To Tell Your Employer

You need to let your employer know you are taking leave.

- For days: Tell them before, or as soon as you can
- For weeks: Provide written notice, if possible

You do not need to give details.

Example:

"I need to take Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave. I will be away from [dates]. Please contact me only by [safe method]."

Do You Need Proof?

Your employer may ask for evidence, but only if it is reasonable.

This means:

- It must be safe for you to provide
- It must not be costly or difficult to get

- You do not need to share personal details

Examples may include:

- A note from a doctor, counsellor, or support worker
- Proof of an appointment
- A document you already have (for example, from police or court)

There is no specific document you must provide.

Your Rights and Protections

Your employer must:

- Keep your information private
- Only share information if required by law
- Not treat you unfairly for asking about or taking leave

Your employer cannot:

- Fire you
- Threaten you
- Cut your hours or pay
- Block training or opportunities
- Treat you worse because you used or asked about the leave

Can You Use Other Types of Leave?

Yes. You may be able to use other types of leave as well if you meet the requirements.

KEY TAKEAWAY

You have a right to take time off for domestic or sexual violence.

- You do not need to share personal details
- Your job is protected
- You only need to provide