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# e2r Alert!

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## What Are an Employers Obligations for The Upcoming Ontario Election?

Ontario Premier Doug Ford has called a snap election, tentatively scheduled to take place on February 27, 2025. What do employers need to know about the rights an employee has during an election in Ontario?

The *Election Act* outlines the entitlements of employees during an election in Ontario. The most notable of these entitlements is the provision for employees to take a protected leave of absence for three consecutive hours to participate in an election.

### When is an employee entitled to take time off?

- The employee must be provided three consecutive hours to vote. In Ontario, polling hours are 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Eastern Time Zone.
  - **Example 1:** An employee who works 9:00am to 5:00pm is not entitled to any time off because they have three consecutive hours after work in which to cast a vote.
  - **Example 2:** An employee who works from 11:00am to 8:00pm must be allowed to leave work at 6:00pm, at the latest, so that they have three consecutive hours to vote before the polls close.
- The time off to participate in the election can be granted at the time of day that best suits the convenience of the employer.

### What can't I do as an employer?

- An employer is not required to compensate the employee for the time taken off, but the leave must not be subtracted from any vacation entitlement.
- An employer must not make any deduction of pay or impose any penalty on the employee, including dismissal, for their absence from work to participate in the election.

We encourage you to allow your employees to exercise their rights under the *Election Act*. If you have any other questions or concerns about your obligations as an employer at election time, please reach out to an e2r™ advisor. Happy voting!

