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COUNTDOWN TO END OF MANDATORY RETIREMENT IN ONTARIO

Law Kicks In December 12; Ontarians To Choose When To Retire

TORONTO — Three months from today, Ontarians will have a choice about when to retire, Labour Minister Steve Peters said.

“People are healthier and living longer, so it is unfair to insist that they stop working simply because they turn 65,” said Peters. “Ending mandatory retirement allows workers to decide when to retire based on lifestyle, circumstance and priorities.”

The government provided a one-year transition period to ensure everyone is ready for the new law to take effect on Dec. 12, 2006. The Ending Mandatory Retirement Statute Law Amendment Act was approved by the legislative assembly in an overwhelming 60-5 vote in December 2005.

When the legislation takes effect, it will amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to protect people aged 65 and over from age discrimination for most employment purposes. The legislation also amends a variety of other statutes that have provisions connected to mandatory retirement.

With the effective date only three months away, employers should:

- Familiarize themselves with the requirements of the act and its possible effect on their workplace policies and practices
- Consider what changes may be necessary to existing policies to comply with the end of mandatory retirement
- Discuss with their unions any changes that might be required to their collective agreements.

Workers and their unions should also understand the provisions of the act and how they apply and then talk to their employers about how the new law will be implemented in their workplace.

“Employers, unions and workers should now be actively preparing for the end of mandatory retirement,” said Peters. “For example, some employers may need to adapt their human resources policies and practices to comply with the law.”

For more information, visit www.labour.gov.on.ca. A toll-free telephone line is also available for public inquiries at 1-866-400-8355.

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