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## **MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT EXPANDS FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

### *More Ontarians Eligible for Job-Protected Leave*

TORONTO — The McGuinty government is making more Ontarians eligible for Family Medical Leave effective immediately, Labour Minister Steve Peters announced today.

“Now, Ontario’s Family Medical Leave allows employees to care for additional family members and people who are like family,” Peters said. “We’re on the side of employees who need assurance that while they are caring for a gravely ill loved one, their jobs will be protected.”

Family Medical Leave gives employees up to eight weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave to care for a gravely ill family member or a person who considers the employee to be like a family member, such as a close friend, where there is a significant risk of death within 26 weeks.

Effective since June 2004, Ontario’s Family Medical Leave dovetails with the federal government’s Compassionate Care Benefits that permit workers in this sort of situation to apply for Employment Insurance benefits while away from work.

Family Medical Leave allows people to better balance their work and family responsibilities in the same way as do maternity and parental leaves. All these are in place to support Ontarians during important times in their lives, said Peters.

“The people of Ontario are our most precious resource and this government believes in making this province a good place in which to work and live now and for years to come,” he added.

For information on exactly how the new eligibility works, visit [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca) or phone toll-free 1-800-531-5551.

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