

British Columbia Leave Laws

This material is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For current and accurate guidance, please consult legal counsel in your jurisdiction.

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Paid Time Off (PTO) in British Columbia

Vacation Leave Quota

2 or 3 weeks

After one year of employment, employees are eligible for 2 consecutive weeks of vacation leave, and after five years of employment, they become eligible for 3 consecutive weeks of leave.

Vacation Pay

Employees are entitled to receive vacation pay based on a percentage of their gross wages. For the first five years of employment, this pay is calculated at 4%, and after five years of employment, it increases to 6%. Employees are typically entitled to receive this pay within the week leading up to the start of their vacation.

Accruals

PTO accruals are not mandatory in British Columbia, but they are widely used by companies.

Employers are generally free to design their own vacation accrual system, although it is usually based on the pay period (payroll cycle). The most common payroll cycles in British Columbia are bi-weekly and monthly.

Roll Over (Carry Over, Brought Forward)

The “use-it-or-lose-it” policy is illegal in Canada.

For more information, please visit vacationtracker.io



The “use-it-or-lose-it” refers to a policy or benefit that requires employees to use a certain amount of vacation time within a certain timeframe, or risk losing them.

Statutory Provisions Addressing Vacation Pay

Vacation is considered earned wages.

Payment of Accrued, Unused Vacation on Termination

The employee’s earnings must be paid upon termination of employment. Employees who are employed for 5 days or less are not entitled to receive vacation pay.

Payout

An employer will pay out any accrued, but unused vacation time to the employee, upon termination of employment.

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Notification for Maren Schleifer:
Has submitted a leave request that requires your attention.
Madelyn Dorwart will be on leave during the same period. [See in Calendar](#)

[Open Calendar](#) [View Dashboard](#)

Pending requests

Request Type	Duration	Period	Deny	Approve
Work from home	2 days	Jan 24th 2025 → Jan 26th 2025	Deny	Approve
Vacation	4 days	Jan 26th 2025 → Jan 30th 2025	Deny	Approve
Sick day	1 day	Jan 24th 2025	Deny	Approve

Approvers

- First level: [User Avatars]
- Second level: [User Avatars]

Sick Leave in British Columbia

For more information, please visit vacationtracker.io

After 90 days of employment, employees are entitled to take up to 5 paid and 3 unpaid days of job-protected leave per calendar year.

Illness or injury leave (sometimes called sick leave)

Employees are entitled to take up to 5 paid days off per year due to personal illness or injury. They do not have to be taken consecutively. The employer may request reasonable proof of the illness.

In addition to these paid days, employees are also entitled to 3 unpaid sick days under the Employment Standards Act.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the paid sick days, an employee must have been employed with the company for at least 90 days. All employees covered by the Employment Standards Act (ESA), including part-time, temporary, and casual employees, are entitled to paid sick leave.

However, the ESA does not cover certain types of employees, including:

- Federally-regulated sectors
- Self-employed workers or independent contractors
- Employees in professions and occupations excluded from the ESA

Payout

An employer pays the 5 days sick leave in BC. An employer needs to pay his employees their regular wages for these days.

In most cases, employers are not required to pay wages or benefits to employees during a long-term illness or injury leave, unless this is specified in the employment contract or collective agreement. However, the length of service does generally continue during this time.

For more information, please visit vacationtracker.io

Family responsibility leave

Employees are entitled to take up to 5 days of unpaid leave per year to help with the care, health or education of a child under the age of 19 in their care or care for any other family member with a health condition. Unused days cannot be rolled over to the next year.

Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave in British Columbia

A maternity leave could last a maximum of 78 weeks. The maternity leave itself lasts for 17 weeks, and after that, mothers can take an additional 61 weeks of parental leave (in which case the father would get no paternity leave).

Maternity Leave

17 weeks

Employers are required to provide eligible employees with up to 17 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. Leave cannot start earlier than 13 weeks before the estimated birth date. Employees may be required to provide a medical certificate.

Employees are entitled to at least 6 weeks of leave after the birth of a child and 6 more weeks if they are unable to return to work for reasons related to childbirth, a total of 12 weeks.

Employees must provide a medical certificate if they want to return to work sooner.

Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is part of parental leave, and fathers can share this leave with mothers.

For more information, please visit vacationtracker.io

Parental Leave

62 weeks

Employers are required to provide employees with up to 62 weeks of unpaid parental leave. Both parents are entitled to a full period of leave.

Leave can start any time after the birth or adoption of a child but must be completed within 78 weeks of the date the baby is born or placed with the parents. Parents may be allowed to receive 5 more weeks of leave due to a child's physical, psychological, or emotional condition.

A medical certificate may be requested for both leave and an extension of leave.

Pregnant employees can take maternity and parental leave. Pregnant employees are entitled to take up to 61 weeks * of unpaid parental leave immediately after 17 weeks of maternity leave ends. A total of 78 weeks of leave.

**61 weeks for the employee who took maternity leave; 62 weeks for other parents*

Payout

Maternity leave is unpaid, but employees may be eligible for maternity and parental benefits through Employment Insurance.

Bereavement Leave in British Columbia

3 days of unpaid leave.

Bereavement leave in British Columbia allows employees to take up to 3 days of unpaid leave in the event that an immediate family member dies.

For more information, please visit vacationtracker.io

This leave does not have to be taken consecutively, and it does not have to be used specifically for attending a funeral. Additionally, the leave does not have to start on the date of the family member's death.

Payout

Bereavement leave in British Columbia is unpaid.

Jury Duty Leave in British Columbia

Employers must give employees unpaid leave for jury duty.

The Employment Standards Act requires employers to provide unpaid leave to employees for jury duty, and prohibits employers from terminating employees for participating in the jury selection process or serving as a juror. Upon completion of their jury duty, employees must be allowed to return to their original position or a comparable one, and continue to receive standard calculations for vacation, salary increases, pension, medical and other benefit plan entitlements.

Payout

Employers are not required to pay employees who miss work to attend court. However, jurors can claim an allowance or compensation from the province for time spent in court. In British Columbia, jurors receive \$20 for the first 10 days served. On the 11th day of jury duty, jurors receive \$60 per day until the 50th day, at which point the amount increases to \$100 a day for 50 or more days.

Reservists' Leave in British Columbia

20 days of unpaid leave for training, or as long as they are engaged in military operations (deployment or emergencies)

Leave for training

Canadian Forces reservists who are also employees are entitled to 20 days of unpaid leave per calendar year to participate in Canadian Forces training activities.

Leave for deployment or emergencies

Canadian Forces reservists who are also employees are entitled to unpaid leave for the duration of their:

- deployment to a Canadian Forces operation inside or outside of Canada
- engagement in pre-deployment or post-deployment activities required by the Canadian Forces (either inside or outside Canada)
- deployment to assist with an emergency or its aftermath in Canada.

A four weeks' written notice is required.

Payout

Reservists' leave is unpaid.

Voting Leave in British Columbia

Up to 4 consecutive hours of paid time off to vote.

Employers in British Columbia are required to ensure that eligible employees have a 4-hour period free from work during voting hours in order to cast their vote. This arrangement allows an employee sufficient time to travel to and from their place of work and the polling station where they are eligible to vote.

This does not necessarily entitle the employee to 4 hours of paid time off, but rather that their work schedule should allow for a 4-hour period in which they are not scheduled to be at work during voting hours. If an employee has a 4-hour period outside of their work schedule during which they are able to vote, the employer is not required to provide them with additional time off for this purpose. Advance polling stations are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Pacific Time Zone) and polling stations are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election. An employee who works from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. is not entitled to time off work to vote, as they have more than four hours after the end of their shift to cast their ballot.

Time off can be at the beginning of a shift or the end of a shift. For example, if an employee normally works from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., the employer must either allow the employee to start work at noon, or let the employee leave work early at 4:00 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m. in order to provide the employee with enough time to vote. There are certain exceptions to the rules outlined above. For example, if a voter lives in a remote location that is not accessible to a voting place during voting hours, they are not entitled to any time off work to vote.

An employer may select which hours employees take off to cast their vote. The company may choose the hours that are most convenient for the business.

An employer can't refuse to pay employees for this time. It is also illegal for the employer to penalize employees for asking for time off to cast a ballot.

Payout

An employer pays voting leave.