



Ref: 57603

July 26, 2019

Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

MAYOR'S OFFICE  
JUL 31 2019  
VICTORIA, B.C.

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you for your letter of April 17, 2019, indicating Victoria City Council's support for amendments to *Employment Standards Act* (Act) to require paid leave for employees who have experienced intimate, personal and relationship violence.

As you are likely aware, on April 29, 2019, I introduced the *Employment Standards Amendment Act, 2019* (Bill 8) into the British Columbia Legislature. Bill 8 received Royal Assent on May 30, 2019 and is now law. A copy of Bill 8 and the accompanying News Release can be found here: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/progress-of-bills> and <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019LBR0013-000815>.

Among other things, Bill 8 amended the Act by introducing a new section respecting domestic or sexual violence leave. The new section entitles workers up to 10 days of unpaid leave per employment year, which the employee may choose to take intermittently or in one continuous period, as well as up to 15 weeks of continuous unpaid leave, if an employee, a child in the employee's care or a dependent adult, has experienced domestic or sexual violence.

The leave respecting domestic or sexual violence will permit the employee to, without the risk of job loss:

- seek medical attention for the employee or eligible person in respect of a physical or psychological injury or disability caused by the domestic or sexual violence;
- obtain for the employee or eligible person victim services or other social services relating to domestic or sexual violence;
- obtain for the employee or eligible person psychological or other professional counselling services in respect of a psychological or emotional condition caused by the domestic or sexual violence;
- temporarily or permanently relocate the employee or eligible person or both the employee and eligible person;
- seek legal or law enforcement assistance for the employee or eligible person, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to the domestic or sexual violence; and,
- any prescribed purpose.

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Although the new leave entitlements do not include paid leave provisions for people who have experienced domestic or sexual violence, please be assured that Victoria City Council's input will be taken into consideration in future discussions on this matter.

I would also like to assure you that our Government is committed to working collaboratively with partners in the community to ensure supports are available for survivors of domestic or sexual violence and anyone who is impacted by domestic or sexual violence. Accordingly, the input you have provided on this matter is very much appreciated.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Bains', with a horizontal line underneath.

Harry Bains  
Minister