

HR QUARTERLY BULLETIN

WINTER 2026



**Driving change and
shaping the future**

LEGAL UPDATES

Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025 (Bill 30) - expected to pass soon.

- Job Posting Platforms
- Job Seeking Leave
- Extended Layoffs

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Workplace wellness in 2026 will be less about standalone programs and more about a culture of well-being woven into leadership, communication, benefits, and daily work experiences.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Navigating Tariffs: Challenges and Opportunities for Ontario Companies - Tariffs in 2025 have been a challenge Ontario's economy, but business adaptation, government support, and HR strategies offer resilience in and growth opportunities in 2026.



Employers have been adjusting to everchanging and shifting priorities. At S&G HR Consulting, Sandra & Marina support local businesses to adapt to these changes by providing consulting services, policy development, and training programs that fit their organization's unique, specific needs. For any additional questions, please contact us through our [website](#) or call us at **905-325-3396**.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025 (Bill 30)

Bill 30 is expected to pass soon and will amend several Ontario workplace laws, including the **Employment Standards Act (ESA)**. Keep a lookout for the date this will take effect.

1. Job Posting Platforms

- Introduces new rules for online platforms that host **public job postings**.
 - Excludes: Employer-run platforms that post only their own jobs (e.g., company websites). Any platforms exempted by future regulations.
- Platform operators must:
 - Provide a clear and visible way to report fraudulent job postings.
 - Have a written policy outlining how fraudulent postings are handled.
 - Keep copies of all versions of this policy for **three years** after each version is no longer in use.

2. Job Seeking Leave

- Creates a new **unpaid job-seeking leave** for employees affected by large layoffs.
- Applies when **50 or more employees** receive notice of termination.
- Employees may take up to **three days** to search for work, attend interviews, or training.
- Employees should give **three days' notice** where possible.

3. Extended Layoffs

- Allows employers and employees to agree to **longer temporary layoffs** (35 or more weeks in a 52-week period).
- Layoffs **cannot exceed 52 weeks in a 78-week period**.
- To be valid:
 - Both parties must agree in writing.
 - The employer must provide a **recall date**.
 - The employer must obtain **approval from the Director of Employment Standards**.

Reminder: The Working for Workers Six Act, 2024 (Bill 229) is effective from January 1, 2026. Further details refer to: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/1005404/working-for-workers-six-act-2024>

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Workplace wellness in 2026 will be less about standalone programs and more about a culture of well-being woven into leadership, communication, benefits, and daily work experiences. Organizations that embrace this more inclusive, human approach will be better equipped to attract, retain, and support their people. Here are some strategies that will help shape your organization's culture of well-being.



1. Advancing Holistic Well-Being

Organizations are moving beyond traditional wellness programs and embracing whole-person care that integrates physical, mental, financial, and women's health needs. Menopause support, mental health resources, and financial wellbeing tools are becoming essential components of a truly inclusive employee experience. This may include paid leave or sick days for menopause symptoms and support to address the physical, social, and mental impacts that is personalized, proactive, and embedded into workplace culture.

2. Making Organizational Care Your Competitive Advantage

When employees feel valued and supported, engagement rises, burnout decreases, and retention improves. Transparent communication, acting on feedback, fostering an environment of psychological safety, and empowering managers to form the foundation of a caring culture that sets organizations apart.

3. Building a Culture of Continuous Insight

Listening with intent - annual surveys aren't enough. Leading organizations are actively listening, using pulse surveys, sentiment analysis, and regular manager check-ins to understand the evolving employee experience. This ongoing feedback loop directly shapes wellbeing, performance, and retention strategies.

4. Redefining the ROI of Well-Being

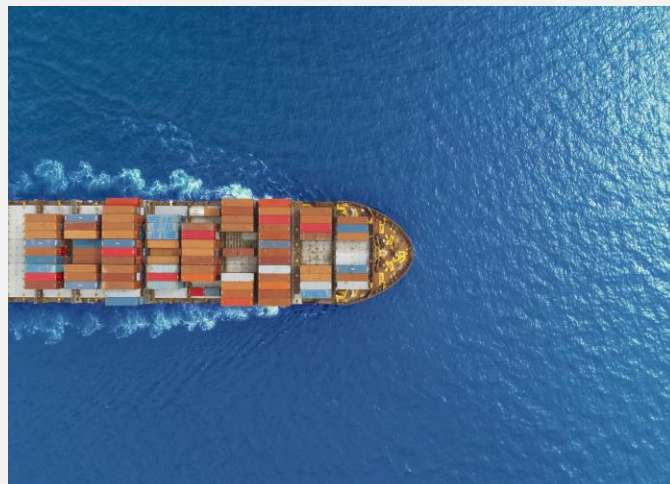
Wellbeing is no longer viewed as a cost, it is a strategic core business investment that drives productivity, resilience, trust, and long-term performance. Forward-thinking leaders are evaluating wellbeing not just through healthcare savings, but through its total impact on people and business outcomes.

As we move into 2026, prioritizing workplace well-being will reveal stronger engagement and improved performance. This will be one of the most meaningful investments an organization can make to truly stand out in the marketplace.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Navigating Tariffs: Challenges and Opportunities for Ontario Companies in 2025–2026

The introduction of tariffs on key exports like steel, aluminum, automobiles, and auto parts in 2025 has created noticeable ripples across Ontario's economy effects that are expected to continue into 2026. The Financial Accountability Office (FAO) of Ontario estimates that these tariffs could slow GDP growth from about 1.7% without tariffs to just 0.6% in 2025, while employment growth could decline significantly. Manufacturing is among the hardest-hit sectors, with roughly 119,200 fewer jobs projected by 2026 if tariffs remain in place.



Yet amid these challenges, there are reasons for cautious optimism. Many Ontario businesses report confidence in their ability to adjust to changing trade conditions, with nearly half indicating they can modify operations despite initial concerns. Government programs are helping to ease the transition: tax deferrals, rebates, and an expanded Skills Development Fund support worker retraining and transitions into new roles or industries. Meanwhile, initiatives like the Ontario Together Trade Fund provide grants and loans to strengthen local supply chains and diversify markets beyond the U.S.

Companies themselves are also exploring opportunities for growth. Investments in advanced manufacturing, technology, and new export markets are helping businesses remain competitive and resilient. These efforts not only mitigate some of the immediate economic pressures but also offer the potential to create jobs and support long-term growth as Ontario adapts to global trade shifts.

Human Resources (HR) teams play an important role in navigating these changes. By supporting workforce planning, reskilling, and internal mobility, HR ensures that employees can transition smoothly into new roles as operations evolve. Clear communication and thoughtful change management reduce uncertainty and help maintain trust. Flexible work arrangements, well-being initiatives, and retention programs further support employees during periods of disruption. By balancing cost management with long-term talent strategies, HR helps organizations remain agile and resilient.

While tariffs present undeniable challenges, proactive business strategies, government support, and strong HR practices offer pathways for Ontario companies to adapt and thrive. With the right approach, what begins as a disruption can also be an opportunity—for innovation, workforce development, and building a more resilient economy.

Resources:

For your free Organizational Assessment, click [here](#)

For access to further resources and useful links relating to Covid-19, health and safety mandates, and public health updates, please visit: [S&G HR Consulting Resources](#).