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## Tuesday, September 3, 2019

However, the following activities would not qualify as health or care related responsibilities:



- Attending a family social gathering;
- Routinely walking the dog, buying groceries or watering the plants of a family member;
- Helping with a family member's wedding arrangements;

# Feds Explain Dog Walk Rule

Federally-regulated employees should not routinely take time off work to walk the dog, says the Department of Labour. Staff issued bulletins explaining scores of new *Canada Labour Code* regulations that took effect September 1.

"Nobody is disputing the government's intent on work-life balance, but the constraints on all kinds of businesses needed to be taken into consideration," said Bob Ballantyne, president of the Freight Management Association of Canada, a shippers' group. "Unions have already dealt with these issues for decades through their collective agreements."

The Association in a petition to cabinet urged that transport companies be exempted from the regulations introduced to "provide greater flexibility for employees", according to the labour department. One regulation permits federally-regulated employees to refuse overtime to tend to "family responsibilities".

"In this context, 'responsibility' refers to the constraint imposed by moral or social rules to have to take care of something or someone," said the department bulletin. Examples would include driving a family member to the doctor; picking a child up from school due to illness; attending a parent-teacher meeting; staying home with children on a snow day or other "unexpected school or daycare closure"; and helping to move an elderly parent.

The bulletin continued: "However, the following activities would not qualify as health or care-related responsibilities:"

- "Attending a family social gathering";
- "Routinely walking the dog, buying groceries or watering the plants";
- "Helping with a family member's wedding arrangements";

- “Dealing with non-urgent legal issues for the family member”;
- “Picking up mail, going to the bank or paying bills for the family member.”

Also exempt are leaving work to attend school plays, concerts or minor hockey, or “helping a family member study for an exam”.

Amendments do grant employees new rights to request flexible hours and telecommuting, and seek days off at time-and-a-half in lieu of overtime pay. New regulations also mandate payment in lieu of half-hour breaks every five hours; require minimum eight-hour rest periods between shifts; 24 hours’ notice of shift changes; and four days’ notice of schedule changes.

Freight Management’s Ballantyne said the amendments failed to accommodate inevitable pressures in transport. “These measures will unavoidably result in cascading harm for all industries that rely on rail, truck or air transportation in Canada,” he wrote cabinet.

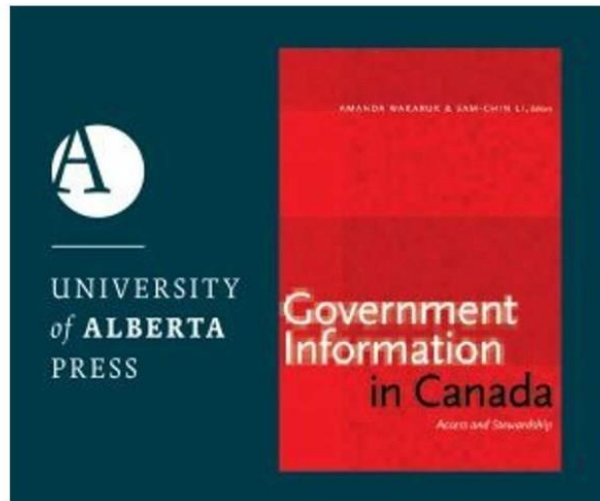
“Any delays in trucking, rail or air cargo like 24 hours’ notice of a shift change can impact suppliers’ ability to meet on-time delivery requirements,” Ballantyne said in an interview.

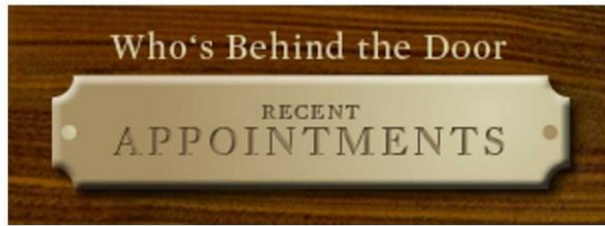
The *Labour Code* amendments were included in two omnibus budget bills that passed Parliament in 2017 and 2018. Bill C-63 ran to 328 pages; Bill C-86 totaled 884 pages. Ballantyne said shippers took little notice of the rules until weeks before they were to come into force.

“It’s an odd way to go about this,” he said. “Those omnibus bills under any government are not the right way for democracies to operate. It’s left to stakeholders to ferret out these in issues in bills that run to 800 pages.”

By Staff 🇨🇦 🇨🇦

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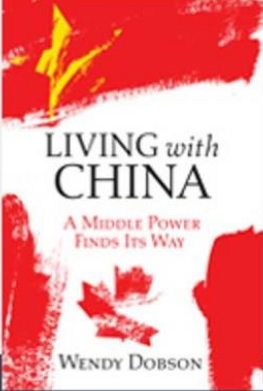
The complex block contains a book advertisement. At the top, the title "Appel" is in a large, bold, red serif font, followed by the subtitle "A Canadian in the French Foreign Legion" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font. Below this is a book cover image showing a hot air balloon and a person in a sky. To the right of the cover is the author's name "Joel Adam Struthers" in a black, sans-serif font. At the bottom right is the publisher's logo, "WLU PRESS", in a red and white box, followed by the text "WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY PRESS" and the website "www.wlupress.wlu.ca".

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New Brunswick	8.5%
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