

Bill 173 - The Intimate Partner Violence Act, 2024

HOW NEW LAWS & REGULATIONS ARE CREATED IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

Published 20th August, 2024



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THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

A piece of legislation refers to a written law that provides rules of conduct. In order to become a law, legislation has to be approved by Parliament. For Bill 173 to become law, it needs to pass through Ontario's legislative process that includes the Legislative Assembly (Elected MPPs) and the Monarch (Head of State, represented by the Lieutenant Governor in Ontario).



Simultaneously, MPP Jess Dixon is currently co-leading a sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy that has begun its 3 phased study on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Ontario from July - December to inform a report that is independent of Bill 173.

Step 1 INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING:



Private member's bills, like Bill 173, are introduced in routine proceedings with a sponsor providing a brief explanation. No debate or vote occurs during the first reading. On March 7th, 2024, MPP Wong-Tam, as one of the sponsors, spoke at the Legislative Assembly to explain Bill 173.

Step 2 SECOND READING AND REFERRAL TO A COMMITTEE:



At the second reading, the bill and its impacts are debated and MPPs vote on whether it should be studied further by a specific committee or scrapped entirely. On April 10th, 2024 Bill 173 was moved to Second Reading by Mrs. Lisa Gretzky, another of the co-sponsors. Following debate, the bill was passed and was ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

Step 3 CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE:



The Chair of the Standing Committee decides when and if bills move through the committee process. Bills selected to move forward are studied in depth, which often includes holding public hearings. The committee discusses and votes on amendments to bills and whether to send the bill back to the Legislature for a third reading.

Step 6 ROYAL ASSENT:



Once the bill is adopted by the Legislative Assembly, it proceeds to the Lieutenant Governor, representing the Crown in Ontario, who must sign the bill for it to have Royal Assent and become law. Bill 173 will come into effect on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Step 5 THIRD READING AND ADOPTION:



The third reading is the final opportunity for the House to debate the bill. At this stage, a vote is taken on the bill in its entirety, including any amendments that have been made. Members then cast their final vote on whether to adopt Bill 173.

Step 4 REPORT STAGE:



Once the Committee has completed its study, it reports the bill back to the Chamber.

WHAT COMES NEXT AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Declaring IPV an epidemic in Ontario cannot be a symbolic legislative move alone. The declaration must be accompanied by provincial commitments to comprehensive actions that go beyond legislation. This includes potential new pieces of legislation, regulatory changes to existing laws, policy directives, new provincial programs or services, and budget measures. These efforts should be informed by the combined research and advocacy from the VAW sector, subject matter experts, survivors, and academics to ensure sustainable, wrap-around support for victims of IPV. While regulations are one tool among many, they are crucial in translating legislative intentions into actionable, enforceable measures. However, the work to end IPV will not conclude once Bill 173 receives Royal Assent. It will require our continued advocacy to push implementation of evidence-based policy recommendations outlined in various resources, including the "The Current State of Intimate Partner Violence in Ontario - Bill 173 Research and Resources."

To learn more about how a Bill becomes law in Ontario please visit the Legislative Assembly of Ontario's [website](#).