It is widely agreed that there is a crisis in labour/employment standards enforcement. A key issue is the role of deterrence measures that penalise violations. Employment standards enforcement in Ontario, like in most jurisdictions, is based mainly on a compliance framework promoting voluntary resolution of complaints and, if that fails, ordering restitution. Deterrence measures that penalise violations are rarely invoked. However, the Ontario government has recently increased the role of proactive inspections and tickets, a low-level deterrence measure which imposes fines of CAD295 plus victim surcharges. In examining the effectiveness of the use of tickets in inspections, we begin by looking at this development in the broader context of employment standards enforcement and its historical trajectory. Then, using administrative data from the Ministry of Labour, we examine when and why tickets are issued in the course of workplace inspections. After demonstrating that even when ticketable violations are detected, tickets are issued only rarely, we explore factors associated with an increased likelihood of an inspector issuing a ticket. Finally, we consider how the overall deterrent effect of workplace inspections is influenced by the use or non-use of deterrence tools.