

## DECEMBER 2023 MONTH IN REVIEW

# Saskatchewan

### **LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **New Laws**

Nov 30: Saskatchewan announced that it has secured another 100 nominations to its Immigrant Nominee Program, bringing total nominations for 2023 to a record high of 7,350. This is in addition to the 6,000 immigrants that enter the province each year through federal streams.

#### **Mental Stress**

Nov 30: Like most provinces and territories across Canada, Saskatchewan launched its new free 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline as part of the national initiative to prevent suicide deaths. Those who call 9-8-8 will be connected to the closest responder, based on their area code.

**Action Point:** Find out [how to make your workplace psychologically safe](#)

#### **Drugs & Alcohol**

Nov 8: Saskatchewan passed amendments to *The Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act* that increase the minimum age for tobacco and vapour product purchase from 18 years of age to 19. In addition to protecting youth, the change also aligns age restrictions for smoking and vaping with existing restrictions on liquor and cannabis sales in Saskatchewan.

**Action Point:** Use the [OHSI Substance Abuse Compliance Game Plan](#) to curb drugs and alcohol at your workplace

#### **Workers Comp**

Dec 11: The Saskatchewan WCB finalized 2024 average premium rates, which will remain unchanged at \$1.28 per \$100 of assessable payroll. Industry-wise, rates will increase for 35% of employers and either remain the same or go down for the remaining 65%. Ninety percent of employers had zero injuries or fatalities in 2022, the agency added.

## Environmental

Dec 6: Two days after unanimously passing the Saskatchewan Assembly, legislation (Bill 151) removing the federal carbon tax from residential SaskEnergy heating bills received Royal Assent and took effect. The bill also makes the Crown the sole registered distributor of natural gas in the province with full authority over implementing the greenhouse gas pollution pricing law.

## Environmental

Sep 1: September 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline to [submit feedback](#) on a consultation to tackle [textile waste](#), the fifth-largest category of plastic waste in landfills. The plan focuses on redesigning, reducing, reusing, repairing, and recycling textiles to reduce plastic microfibre pollution.

## CASES

### Workplace Harassment: Employee Didn't Suffer Anti-Union Harassment

An employee who was actively involved in union affairs during a highly contentious labour dispute claimed her bosses and co-workers bullied and harassed her. The arbitrator found that while some name-calling, malicious gossip and such might have occurred, it didn't rise to the level of workplace harassment banned by the company's zero tolerance policy. The Saskatchewan Court of Appeal held that the arbitrator's ruling was reasonable and refused to overturn it [[United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1400 v Saskatoon Co-operative Association Limited](#), 2023 SKCA 122 (CanLII), November 10, 2023].

**Action Point:** Use the extensive resources on the OHSI [Workplace Violence Compliance Center](#) to protect your workers from violence and harassment