

Federal

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Infectious Illnesses

Mar 27: Amendments to the [Human Pathogens and Toxins Act](#) (HPTA) passed in December received Royal Assent and took effect. The HPTA regulates use and possession of human pathogens and toxins across all sectors, including research at universities and hospitals, vaccine development in the pharmaceutical industry, and quality control in the food industry.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Bloodborne & Human Pathogens Exposure Control & Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

WHMIS

Mar 15: New [hazardous substance assessments](#) (HSAs) are now available for Benzyl alcohol, Citric acid, Hydrochloric acid (and hydrogen chloride), Hydrogen peroxide, and Sodium hypochlorite. HSAs are designed to help companies create compliant Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and WHMIS labels by providing information on how Health Canada would classify a substance under Parts 7 and 8 of the [Hazardous Products Regulations](#).

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [WHMIS Training Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

WHMIS

Apr 1: Health Canada increased the [fees](#) it charges on claims for exemption under the [Hazardous Materials Information Review Act](#) (HMIRA). Fees are subject to an annual adjustment based on the previous fiscal year's All-items Consumer Price Index for Canada.

Heat Stress

Feb 11: The government published new [Canada Occupational Health and Safety \(COHS\) regulations](#) requiring federally regulated employers, in consultation with their joint health and safety committee (JHSC) or safety representative, to implement measures to protect workers against thermal stress. The new requirements will take effect in February 2027.

Action Point: If you're federally regulated, you can use the OHS Insider [Heat Stress Safety and Compliance Game Plan](#) to ensure that you'll be ready when the new regulations take effect next February.

Airborne Contaminants

Feb 11: Newly published [regulations](#) requiring federally regulated employers to implement an engineered nanomaterials prevention and control program will take effect next February. Affected industries include aircraft servicing, pipeline manufacturers, research labs, communications, and road and rail transportation.

Action Point: Find out about the [6 steps to take to protect workers from nanoparticle hazards](#).

Electrical Safety

Feb 11: New [COHS regulations](#) require federally regulated employers to implement the United States National Fire Protection Association standard 77 (NFPA 77), *Recommended Practice on Static Electricity*, in all situations where there's a presence of static electricity, effective February 2027.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Electrical Safety Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

Radiation

Feb 11: New federal [COHS regulations](#) require employers to keep workers' exposure to non-solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation with wavelengths ranging from 180 nanometres (nm) and 400 nm within specified ACGIH Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) and Biological Exposure Indices (BEIs). Previously, there were no maximum federal workplace exposure levels for non-solar UV radiation, which typically arises from arc welding and medical practice for bacteria killing, ink curing, phototherapy, and other applications. Effective date: February 2027.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Radiation Safety and Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Airborne Contaminants

Feb 11: New [regulations](#) establish the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) hazard exposure level for radon in maritime, trains, oil and gas and other federally regulated workplaces (other than aviation and mining where radon isn't an issue) as 200 Bq/m³, which is in line with current *COHS Regulations* and Health Canada guidelines.

New Laws

Mar 13: The federal government announced that from now through March 31, 2027, it will, within two weeks of a province or territory's request, permit rural employers to retain their current number of low-wage Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) Program while also temporarily increasing the allowable share of low-wage TFWs from 10% to 15% of their workforce in eligible rural regions. Sector-specific exemptions from the cap will remain in place with employers in the healthcare, construction, and food processing sectors remaining subject to a 20% cap on their low-wage temporary foreign workforce. Seasonal sectors such as fish and seafood processing and tourism will continue to benefit from the existing TFW Program cap exemption for seasonal positions.

Action Point: Expect more of your workforce to speak a language other than English and find out [whether OHS laws require you to provide multilingual safety training](#) to your workers.

New Laws

Mar 31: The federal government extended the temporary work permit measures for Ukrainian immigrants that were due to expire today for another year. As a result, Ukrainians who received permits from [Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel \(CUAET\)](#) work will now have until March 31, 2027, to apply to extend their work permit for up to three years.

New Laws

Mar 11: Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) officially extended the temporary maximum duration of Employment Insurance (EI) Work-Sharing agreements from 38 weeks to 76 weeks relief measures until March 31, 2027. The extension also applies to the temporary waiver of the required cooling-off period (equal to the length of the first agreement) between successive Work-Sharing agreements established while temporary special measures are in place.

Training

Mar 11: The federal government launched a new EI [Worker Retention Grant](#) offering \$102.7 million in support to employers to provide training opportunities enabling workers to upskill while maintaining up to 70% of their regular income during Work-Sharing. The Grant, which will be available to all sizes of employers from all sectors, will allow businesses to provide top-ups to their employees' income while on Work-Sharing.

New Laws

Mar 12: A newly established Tripartite Advisory Council comprised of representatives from government, employers, and unions will consult on policy and help promote consensus on federal regulation of labour matters, including occupational health and safety (OHS) and employment standards issues.

New Laws

Mar 12: [Bill C-12](#) proposing a wide range of new legal measures to strengthen Canadian border security and prevent the flow of illegal drugs, human trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime, passed Third Reading in the House of Commons but hasn't yet passed the Senate.

New Laws

Mar 11: Newly tabled [Private Member Bill C-266](#), which will unlikely pass, mandates the development of a national framework for the recognition of skilled trades, harmonization of credential recognition, and mobility of skilled trades workers in Canada.

Workplace Violence

Mar 12: Debate continues on [Bill C-225](#) amending the *Criminal Code* to create new offences for engaging in intimate partner violence and ban peace officers from releasing persons arrested for an intimate partner offence if they've committed such an offence in the last five years or are at large on a release order for such an offence.

Action Point: Domestic and intimate partner violence becomes an OHS compliance issue when it happens at the victim's workplace. Bottom Line: Simply having a workplace violence prevention plan isn't enough. You also need to incorporate protections against workplace domestic violence into the plan. Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Plan](#) to protect your own workers.

Workplace Harassment

Mar 26: The House of Commons passed [Bill C-9](#) making it a crime to wilfully promote hatred against any identifiable group by displaying certain symbols in a public place or intentionally obstruct or intimidate a person from attending a mosque or other public place of religious worship and repealing the requirement that the Attorney General consent to the prosecution of hate propaganda offences. The Bill has now gone to the Senate.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Environmental

Mar 30: The federal government launched public consultations on proposed changes to its [List of pests regulated by Canada](#) (LRP). The deadline to comment is June 5.

Environmental

Mar 12: [Private Member Bill C-269](#) proposes to amend the *Income Tax Act* to provide a new tax credit to certain businesses that acquire qualifying heat recovery equipment to recover heat produced by industrial processes and convert it to generate energy.

CASES

Privacy: Bus Company's New AI Drivers' Surveillance System Is Too Intrusive

A bus company installed an artificial intelligence (AI) remote surveillance system in all vehicles, using cameras mounted on windshields to capture both the interior, including the driver's workstation, and front of the vehicle. The federal arbitrator ruled that the newly installed AI-based Samsara system gathered much more extensive personal data than the conventional video cameras the company had previously used and that the resulting harms to drivers' Charter privacy rights outweighed the relatively minor improvements to safety. Moreover, the AI system's remote real-time viewing and other features allowed the company to use the system to gather and access data for purposes other than safety. Result: The company had to stop using the system within 90 days and pay \$100 in privacy damages to each affected driver. The company appealed but the court upheld the ruling [[Coach Canada Workers' Union \(CSN\) v. NewCAN Coach Company ULC \(Coach Canada\)](#), 2026 CanLII 27321 (CA SA), March 5, 2026].

Action Point: Find out about [the 11 ways you can use](#) Artificial Intelligence to improve workplace safety and OHS compliance without trampling on workers' privacy rights.

Infectious Illness: COVID Vaccination Refusal Is Just Cause to Fire Airline Worker

WestJet fired an aircraft maintenance employee for disobeying its mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy. The Canada Industrial Relations Board ruled that the policy was a reasonable safety measure and that WestJet had just cause to terminate. The federal court dismissed the employee's appeal, finding that the Board's ruling was reasonable and the hearing was fair [[Henrikson v. Westjet](#), 2026 FCA 39 (CanLII), February 24, 2026].

Action Point: Dealing with vaccine refusals, whether COVID-19, influenza, measles, or any other pathogen, is very tricky even in health-sensitive settings. Find out how to take the right steps if [workers defy your mandatory vaccination policy](#).