

British Columbia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PPE

Apr 1: Newly effective changes to *OHS Regulations* require operators and passengers on all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, and motorcycles to wear headgear meeting: i. CSA CAN3-D230-M85, Protective Headgear in Motor Vehicle Applications; ii. British Safety Institution Standard BS5361.1976; iii. Snell Memorial Foundation 1995 Standard for Protective Headgear; or iv. US Federal Standard for Motorcycle Helmets.

Action Point: Use the OHSI [PPE Head Protection Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent head injuries and OHS penalties at your workplace.

Respiratory Protection

Apr 1: Revised [OHS requirements](#) for use of tight-fitting respirators eliminate the term “clean shaven” and replace it with new language requiring employers to ensure that nothing is allowed to intrude between the skin of a worker’s face or neck and the respirator seal, or otherwise interfere with the proper functioning of the respirator.

Action Point: Requiring workers who use tight-fitting respirators to be clean shaven can expose you to discrimination liability risks when shaving would violate a worker’s religion. Find out more about workers’ rights to safety policy exemptions and other reasonable accommodations and [how far you must bend PPE rules to accommodate workers’ religion](#).

Material Handling

April 24 is the deadline to comment on [proposed changes](#) to OHS regulations (Part 12) governing automotive lifts and other vehicle supports. Key revisions include i. new standards for automotive lifts; ii. clarification that lifting devices designed for parking or storage aren’t considered “automotive lifts;” iii. mandatory “qualified person” inspections of autolifts not built to listed standards at least every four months; iv. certification of autolifts as safe for use; v. requirement that a qualified person assemble and install autolifts, portable automotive lifting devices, or other vehicle supports in accordance with a proposed installation standard; and v. new recordkeeping obligations for inspection and maintenance.

Action Point: Jacks and automotive lifts are extremely hazardous. Find out how to implement an effective [Tire, Wheel & Rim Servicing Safety & Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

Crane Safety

April 24: April 24 is the deadline to comment on WorkSafeBC’s proposed [OHS changes](#) affecting employers’ obligation to certify certain kinds of dangerous equipment as being safe for use, including tower cranes, placing booms, masts, and truck-mounted concrete pumps with integral placing booms. The changes address how often certification is required and how and where certification records are kept.

Action Point: Use the OHS Insider [Cranes/Hoists/Lifting Device Compliance Game](#)

[Plan](#) to prevent crane violations at your workplace.

Fire Safety

Apr 1: WorkSafeBC approved [Amendments](#) to Part 31 of the OHS Regulation to align the definition of firefighter with the definition in the *Workers' Compensation Act* and clarify that the employer and worker obligations under Part 31 apply to society fire brigades and volunteer firefighters. Effective date: October 1, 2026.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective and legally sound [Fire Prevention Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent fires and explosions at your workplace.

Transportation Safety

Mar 30: [Bill 6](#) amending the British Columbia *Motor Vehicle Act* to give the government authority to establish a system enabling residents to apply for, renew, or replace their licence online is now in Committee. Regulations will be necessary to fill in the crucial operational details when and if the legislation passes.

Mar 30: Committee

Emergency Response

Mar 16: The BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) has received record numbers of applications for wildland firefighter positions ahead of the 2026 wildfire season. There are over 600 year-round positions available. The agency is also providing specialized training for wildland urban interface operations to more than 1,700 fire departments, First Nations, and contractors.

Action Point: With the wildfire season officially underway, it's important to implement a [Wildfire Smoke Protection Game Plan](#) to guard your workers against smoke exposure, both indoors and outdoors.

Industry Challenges

Mar 30: Newly tabled [Bill 14](#) would authorize BC Timber Sales (BCTS) to issue timber sales licences for a wider range for a wider range of fibre-generating and forest stewardship activities, including commercial thinning, wildfire risk reduction, and salvage of damaged trees. The government claims that the new licensing regime will create jobs and increase the province's fibre supply by as much as 17,700 truck loads, or 800,000 cubic metres.

New Laws

Mar 12: Under newly passed legislation ([Bill 5](#)) goods approved for sale or use in another Canadian province may now be sold or used in British Columbia regardless of provincial regulations relating to the goods' sale or use. The same principle applies to services supplied in another province. The government will issue regulations supplying the operational details of the new free trade and labour mobility system.

New Laws

Mar 17: British Columbia's campaign to attract skilled healthcare workers from the US has paid off. As of January 2026, more than 400 US-trained health professionals have accepted job offers in the province, including rural and remote regions where such professionals are most desperately needed. The province has received over

2,750 job applications as of March 2026 from US doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, and allied health professionals as a result of its targeted recruitment efforts.

New Laws

Mar 10: [Bill 10](#), which has passed Second Reading, aims to speed up and improve the Employment Standards Branch (ESB) employee complaint and dispute-resolution process for non-union employees set out in the *Employment Standards Act* and for TFWs under the *Temporary Foreign Worker Protection Act*. Approximately 75% of resolution meetings at the ESB result in voluntary resolution within 30 to 45 days from when a file is first assigned to an ESB officer.

Training

Mar 5: British Columbia and Ottawa agreed to invest \$70.4 million over three years via the new Canada–British Columbia Workforce Tariff Response to support workers in softwood lumber, steel, and other industries affected by tariffs. The new funding will be directed to unemployed workers seeking to gain new skills for in-demand jobs, workers of companies participating in Work-Sharing agreements seeking to upskill or retrain to adapt to industry changes, and employed workers seeking new skills to improve their resiliency within tariff-affected companies.

Privacy

Feb 23: The BC Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) joined 61 other data protection authorities from around the globe in publishing a Joint Statement on use of artificial intelligence (AI) to generate realistic images and videos depicting identifiable individuals without their knowledge and consent. Operators of such systems should implement robust safeguards to ensure privacy and transparency, along with a mechanism individuals can use to request the removal of their personal information.

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.

Workplace Violence

Mar 31: Second Reading for [Bill 13](#) proposing to that would expand safe-access zones at schools and create them at places of worship in which people would be banned from engaging in activity designed to interfere or prevent access to those locations. "Children should be able to get to school, and people should be able to visit their place of worship, without facing intimidation," noted the British Columbia Attorney General in introducing the bills.

Action Point: Are you doing enough to prevent violence at your workplace? Find out how to perform a [Workplace Violence Compliance Audit](#) to find out.

Drugs & Alcohol

Mar 12: Toxic drugs claimed 150 lives in BC in January. While a 10% decrease from January 2025 (167), that's still 4.8 deaths per day. Nearly three-quarters of the lives lost in January 2026 were between 30 and 59 years of age, and 80% were male. Fentanyl and its analogues continue to account for a significant majority of deaths,

with nearly eight in every 10 tests returning positive results. Smoking remains the dominant mode of consumption, accounting for 75% of all drug deaths in January.

Action Point: Find out [how to implement a workplace Naloxone Program to save lives and prevent opioid overdose deaths at your site.](#)

Environmental

Mar 31: Newly tabled [Bill 15](#) would make the environmental assessment process that new projects must navigate more predictable by establishing clear rules governing how issues raised by First Nations are identified and resolved during the process. The Bill also provides for third-party dispute resolution if the Province and a First Nation can't reach consensus at milestones during the environmental assessment process.

CASES

Due Diligence: Company's OHS Safety Training Program Isn't Up to Snuff

A countertop production company was fined \$67,435 for failing to provide proper safety training and supervision to a 22-year-old worker who suffered a partial amputation of two fingers while operating a table saw at one of its plants. The British Columbia Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal (WCAT) upheld the penalty and rejected the company's due diligence defence. Exhibit A: The firm's OHS manual contained a page for the company's president to sign and date but the spaces for both signature and date were blank. The company's recent record of being on the receiving end of several WorkSafeBC OHS orders, including for having an inadequate OHS program, didn't help its case [[A2201154 \(Re\)](#), 2026 CanLII 21304 (BC WCAT), February 3, 2026].

Action Point: One of the morals of this case is that a company's executive leaders must be involved in the OHS program—and that involvement must be documented—to establish due diligence. Use the [OHSI Due Diligence Scorecard](#) and accompanying Case Summaries to draw other important lessons that you can use to assess whether your own OHS program meets the standards of due diligence.

Privacy: US AI Company Is Subject to BC Privacy Laws, High Court Rules

The British Columbia Privacy Commissioner ruled that US-based facial recognition technology company Clearview AI Inc. violated the *Protection of Information and Privacy Act* (PIPA) by collecting facial data of British Columbians from social media websites to use for its product without consent. **Result:** It banned Clearview from offering its facial recognition services in BC and required it to stop collecting such facial data from British Columbians and delete the facial data already in its possession. Clearview argued that it was an out-of-province entity not subject to PIPA. The BC Court of Appeal disagreed, finding that Clearview's internet activities in the province were a "sufficient connection" to establish the application of PIPA. "Content providers may physically reside, conduct their business, and locate their servers in a particular location, yet their content is readily accessible from anywhere in the world," the Court reasoned. Nor was it unreasonable for the Commissioner to interpret PIPA as banning Clearview from collecting facial data without consent

[Clearview AI Inc. v. British Columbia (Information and Privacy Commissioner), 2026 BCCA 67 (CanLII), February 18, 2026].

Action Point: Find out about how privacy laws affect workplace safety.