

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Workers' Compensation

Jun 10: With injury rates at a record low and a funding surplus of 117%, WCB Nova Scotia announced its first rate cut in over 20 years. The agency is proposing to reduce 2027 average employer premiums 15%, from \$2.65 to \$2.25 per \$100 of assessable payroll.

Action Point: In addition to earning workers' compensation rebates, [studies show that companies with COR or similar recognition have lower injury rates.](#)

Material Handling

Jun 26: The Nova Scotia Department of Labour OHS Division issued a new [Safety Bulletin](#) warning of the hazards posed by pot haulers, a type of powered equipment used on fishing vessels to retrieve lobster traps, crab pots, and other gear from the ocean floor. OHS inspectors will make it a point to determine whether pot haulers may qualify as "hoists" subject to strict manufacturing, design, and other requirements under OHS regulations. An average of nine injuries involving hoists on fishing vessels were reported to WCB Nova Scotia each year between 2015 and 2024.

Action Point: Use the OHS Insider [Cranes/Hoists/Lifting Device Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent crane violations at your workplace.

Emergency Response

July 31: July 31 is the deadline for Nova Scotia volunteer fire departments, ground search and rescue teams, hazardous materials units, and other emergency response organizations [to apply](#) for up to \$30,000 in funding through the Emergency Services Provider Fund (EPSF). The money can be used for PPE, self-contained breathing apparatus, vehicles, and other equipment.

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.

New Laws

July 16: July 16 is the deadline for Nova Scotia nonprofits, community organizations, and municipalities to [apply](#) for Office of Healthcare Professionals Recruitment (OHPR) Community Fund grants of up to \$25,000 for recruiting and retaining healthcare workers.

Industry Challenges

Jun 24: Nova Scotia unveiled a new [Seafood Sector Strategy](#) to help the industry adapt over the next three years. Key initiatives: i. Launch the Seafood Sector Innovation Hub for applied research; ii. Improve programs to grow sector innovation, efficiency, and resilience; iii. Grow the aquaculture sector; and iv. Provide support for product diversification, value-added processing, and full product utilization.

Industry Challenges

Jun 4: The newly launched Nova Scotia Mining Roundtable will help the provincial government identify and improve opportunities for the mining sector. The roundtable's mission: identify policy, regulatory, and investment barriers and contribute to the development of the provincial mining strategy. Mineral exploration contributes \$35 to \$50 million per year to the province's communities.

Drugs & Alcohol

Jun 25: Increased fines for cannabis offences took effect in Nova Scotia. Examples: i. \$250 to \$500 for a person under 19 who possesses cannabis; ii. \$600 to \$5,000 for purchasing cannabis anywhere other than the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation; iii. \$5,000 to \$25,000 for an individual selling cannabis illegally; and iv. \$15,000 to \$50,000 for a business selling cannabis illegally. It's also now a \$25,000 offence for illegal cannabis sellers to advertise or promote cannabis sales and for landlords to allow cannabis sales on their property.

Action Point: Find out how to create a legally sound [Substance Abuse & Fitness Duty for Policy](#) at your workplace.

Workers' Compensation

Jun 25: The Nova Scotia WCB approved two new Vocational Rehabilitation policies that, among other things, provide workers with access to the Vocational Rehabilitation program sooner while focusing on building job skills that lead to employment

Workers' Compensation

May 11: WCB Nova Scotia upgraded the sign-in process for [WCB Online](#) and [MyAccount](#) to include multi-factor authentication (MFA). The first time you sign in, select "Forgot Password" to set a new password, even if you remember your current one. From there, you'll be guided through resetting your password and setting up multi-factor authentication (MFA) before accessing your account. Going forward, you'll enter a verification code each time you log in.

Environmental

Jun 10: Effective today, lead acid battery manufacturing facilities need only an industrial approval under the [Environmental Assessment Regulations](#). Previously, these facilities needed both an industrial approval and a Class II environmental assessment. Nova Scotia was the only jurisdiction in Canada that required both approvals for this activity.

CASES

Discipline/Work Refusal/Retaliation: Placing Manager on Leave Isn't Reprisal for Harassment Complaint

A health centre manager claimed he was put on paid administrative leave in reprisal for complaining about alleged respectful workplace breaches committed by his boss. The OHS investigator found no reprisal, finding that the centre put the manager on leave not as punishment but to protect him pending the investigation

into his toxic relationship with the boss. The Nova Scotia Labour Board upheld the ruling. Even if it was an adverse action, there was no evidence that the manager was put on leave because he complained. Moreover, he complained to the employer before the new Nova Scotia OHS psychological harms protections he claimed he was asserting officially took effect [[Fells v IWK Health](#), 2026 NSLB 29 (CanLII), June 25, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to [avoid reprisals liability](#) when disciplining workers who commit infractions unrelated to their work refusals or previous exercises of OHS rights.