



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Young Workers

May 25: With companies taking on young workers for summer jobs, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) kicked off a new safety awareness campaign for young workers, who suffer work injuries at disproportionately higher rates than their older counterparts.

Action Point: Planning to hire students this summer? Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [New and Young Workers Safety and Compliance Game Plan](#).

Workplace Violence

May 27: CNESST published new [OHS regulations](#) requiring employers to take measures to prevent workplace sexual violence (SCV): i. give workers written information about SCV risks at the particular workplace; ii. ensure workers receive SCV prevention training by a competent person; iii. implement SCV reporting and complaint procedures; and implement SCV investigation protocols. Effective date: May 27, 2027.

Action Point: Sexual and domestic 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 must also 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.

New Laws

May 12: The Québec Assembly began debate on 2026 Budget legislation ([Bill 6](#)) that would, among other things, provide employers in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors a temporary holiday from having to make contributions to the Health Services Fund.

New Laws

May 25: Québec announced that it's providing nearly \$17.8 million in funding to support 18 projects designed to accelerate the adoption and responsible use of quantum technologies and AI across different sectors of the province's economy.

Industry Challenges

May 7: New red-tape reduction legislation that abolishes the annual royalty that sawmills in Québec must pay on timber from public forests has been reported out of Committee. [Bill 11](#) also revises the pricing of such timber, which will now be based on a minimum rate that's adjusted monthly according to the average profitability of companies and market conditions. The government plans to phase in the new wood pricing system over a two-year transition period.

Industry Challenges

May 29: Québec forestry company Art Massif Structures de Bois is getting a \$2.5 million grant from the province to acquire equipment for producing glulam trembling aspen to enhance its products, which already include glulam spruce. The project is expected to secure about 40 jobs at the company's plant.

New Laws

Jun 4: Québec began paying a refundable tax credit for groceries and energy costs to help low- to middle-income households. The tax credit will be paid in a lump sum of \$100 for eligible individuals without a spouse and \$150 for a couple (eligible individual and their spouse). Another \$50 will be added for households with at least one child under 18 on April 1, 2026. Parents with joint custody will each receive \$50. Unlike the solidarity tax credit, the new one-time credit isn't reduced based on family income.

Privacy

Jun 4: One year ago on this date, Québec implemented an [online process](#) allowing victims whose intimate images were shared without their consent to seek orders to have those images taken down. The government reports that the new recourse is working with the issuance of an average of more than one order issued per week in the past 12 months. Other provinces, including Ontario, have begun adopting similar systems in their own jurisdictions.

Action Point: Cyber privacy and nonconsensual publication of images on PornHub and other sites can become a workplace harassment issue when it involves workers. That's why it's important to create and implement an effective [Cyberbullying Prevention Policy](#) at your workplace.

Workplace Violence

Jun 3: [Bill 4](#) making it easier for individuals who are at risk of domestic violence, including minors under the age of 14, to apply to law enforcement for personal information indicating whether their or their parent's intimate partner has a history of violence. The Bill, which is in Committee, also allows police officers and support services personnel to seek such information on behalf of a third person they reasonably suspect to be in danger of intimate partner violence.

CASES

Environmental: Polluting Fish-Infested Waters Costs Mining Company Record \$100 Million Fine

A Québec mining company was hit with a record \$100 million fine after pleading guilty to 100 counts of violating the *Fisheries Act*. The penalties are for deposits of low-pH acid, zinc, nickel, and other effluents harmful to fish made by two of the company's mines into streams and lakes in the Fermont region of the province. The company will also have to reimburse the government \$250,000 for the costs of the investigation and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent further deposits [*ArcelorMittal Exploitation Minière Canada s.e.n.c.*, [Govt. Press Release](#), May 15, 2026].

Traffic Safety: Paver Didn't Commit & Used Due Diligence to Avoid Flagger,

Signage Violations

A CNESST inspector cites the project manager for what she believes to be OHS violations at a road paving site, including noncompliant signage, a street barrier located in the grassy area rather than the roadway, and a missing road flagger. After reviewing the photographs, witness testimony, and other evidence, the Québec court ruled that the signs were compliant, adequate numbers of flaggers were in place, and the barrier was moved to the grass only temporarily to allow a school bus to pass when the inspector snapped her photo and put back in the road immediately thereafter. And if it had committed the violations, the court continued, the manager exercised due diligence to comply by hiring an experienced and reputable signage firm to create the traffic safety plan and then having the plan signed by a qualified engineer [*CNESST v. Pavages Multipro inc.*, 2026 QCCQ 1984 (CanLII), May 7, 2026].

Action Point: Find out about the OHS [traffic signaling and control requirements](#) across Canada.

Work Refusal: Face Mask Refusal During COVID Is Just Cause to Terminate

After a series of progressive discipline actions, a liquor store fired a cashier for repeated refusals to wear a face mask during the COVID pandemic. The union cried foul, claiming that the action violated the cashier's OHS work refusal rights. But the Québec arbitrator disagreed and dismissed the grievance. The right to refuse work applies only to work that's unduly dangerous. In the context of the pandemic, work becomes unduly dangerous when the employer doesn't follow public health guidelines. But the store in this case did follow guidelines. So, the cashier's refusal was "unreasonable" and the store had just cause to terminate for insubordination [*Société des alcools du Québec (SAQ) v Syndicat des employés de magasins et de bureaux de la Société des alcools du Québec (SEMB – SAQ – CSN)*, 2026 CanLII 32250 (QC SAT), April 2, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to use the [OHSI face mask policy template](#) to enforce mask restrictions in your workplace.