

# Alberta

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Workplace Violence

Dec 4: OHS Code [changes](#) clarify that employers must review their violence and harassment prevention plan: i. after an incident suggesting need for review; ii. after work or worksite changes affecting the potential for violence or harassment to occur; iii. if the JHSC or safety rep requests review; and iv. at least every 3 years. Effective date: March 31, 2025.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site that provides for required program review.

### Cold Stress

Dec 15: The Alberta WCB updated its [OHS guidance](#) on ensuring the safety of building and work that's carried out on ice coverings. The guidance, which hadn't been updated since 2009, focuses on current practices for construction and operation of transportation facilities and working platforms that rely on floating ice for structural adequacy.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement a complete, compliant, and effective [Cold Stress Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

### New Laws

Dec 12: Alberta took measures to secure its border, including the deployment of a new Interdiction Patrol Team to crack down on drug smuggling, gun trafficking and illegal immigration which it claims is occurring along its southern border with the U.S.

### Industry Challenges

Jan 6: The Alberta Government signed a letter of intent with Enbridge to form a new working group with the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission dedicated to doubling the province's oil production for the U.S. market, which currently stands at over 4.3 million barrels delivered per day.

### New Laws

Dec 20: If Alberta follows through on its proposed withdrawal from the Canada

Pension Plan, the provincial plan it proposes to establish would be entitled to 20% to 25% of CPP's asset, about \$120 to \$150 billion, rather than the 53% the province claims. So concludes the federal OSFI chief actuary's [position paper](#), which is in line with an independent advisory panel of actuaries' findings.

### **Workers' Comp**

Jan 1: The Alberta WCB 2025 cost of living adjustment amount is 2.35%. The claims cost threshold increased from \$1,900 to \$2,000, and the maximum allowable amount for burial, cremation and memorial expenses increased to \$17,200. The 2025 travel allowance remains unchanged at 58 cents per kilometer, as does the total meal allowance at \$57.00 per day. Accommodations allowances are also unchanged.

### **Workers' Comp**

Feb 28: February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 is the deadline for Alberta employers to submit their actual payroll and wages data from 2024 and projected figures for 2025 to the WCB. Missing the deadline may result in penalties and late fees.

### **Workers' Comp**

Jan 1: The Alberta WCB revised its Permanent Total Disability (PTD) Policy (Policy 04-04) to clarify that a worker with 100% permanent clinical impairment (PCI) may also be given PTD status. The revised policy adds a third category of PTD for workers with ≥75% to <100% PCI rating who are permanently incapable of participating in employment due to their compensable injury.

### **Environmental**

Jan 10: Public [comments](#) closed on what, if anything, Alberta should do to change its water management system and maximize the availability of water throughout the province.

## **CASES**

### **Asbestos: OHS Board Refuses to Lift Stop Work Order at Asbestos Abatement Site**

OHS inspectors issued a Stop Work order for a low-risk asbestos abatement project after finding asbestos-containing material (ACM) in rooms on the first floor in the J.G. O'Donoghue Building in Edmonton. The prime contractor contended that the ACM was there before the project began and wasn't in areas where work was to be performed. But the Alberta tribunal wasn't impressed and dismissed the appeal. That the ACM found in rooms where work wasn't to be performed was irrelevant because workers were, in fact, present in those rooms without protection. How the ACM got there was also irrelevant, the tribunal concluded [[Clark Builders v Occupational Health and Safety](#), 2025 ABOHSAB 1, January 8, 2025].

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement an [Asbestos Exposure Control Plan](#) at your

workplace.

### **Return To Work: Employer Diligently Tried to Accommodate Worker's Disability**

The Alberta Human Rights Commission rejected a worker's claim against her employer for failing to make reasonable accommodations for her disability. From the moment the worker reported that she had a disability preventing her from operating certain equipment, the company took immediate action to modify her duties and initiated an independent medical exam to clarify her limitations, the Commission reasoned. It then "continuously sought to accommodate" her restrictions. The arbitrator also pooh-poohed her complaints about the affront to dignity she suffered when coworkers questioned her modified duties, finding that these actions weren't attributable to the company and that there's "no stand-alone duty to protect dignity" [[Bixby v City of Medicine Hat](#), 2024 AHRC 147 (CanLII), December 4, 2024].

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound [Return-to-Work Compliance Game Plan](#) for injured workers.