

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Industry Challenges

May 13: Nova Scotia announced that it's lifting the 7-year-old moratorium on new seafood buyer and processor licences in 2 stages: The government will begin accepting applications for buyer and processor licences for most species on August 1 and for lobster buyer and snow crab buyer and processor licences on January 2, 2026. The government will also lift the moratorium on groundfish buying and processing licences that's been in place since the collapse of the groundfish fisheries in 1994.

Industry Challenges

May 21: Nova Scotia granted Goldboro Gold Mining Inc. a 15-year lease for 779 hectares of Crown land near Goldboro that was previously mined for gold. The new Crown land lease is expected to create more than 700 jobs and add \$2.1 billion to Nova Scotia's economy over its lifetime. The company already has licences for mineral exploration and extraction for most of the lease area; the new mine has received environmental assessment approval with industrial approval pending.

Emergency Response

May 28: The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources concluded that there wasn't enough evidence to lay charges under the *Forests Act* in connection with the 2023 wildfire in Upper Tantallon/Hammonds Plains, which burned 969 hectares.

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

Jun 4: Nova Scotia removed trade barriers with Alberta and Prince Edward Island and plans to do the same with BC, Manitoba, Ontario and the federal government as soon as those jurisdictions officially pass legislation equivalent to the province's recently enacted *Free Trade and Mobility within Canada Act*.

Return To Work

Jun 4: The Nova Scotia WCB approved the [Return to Work and Duty to Cooperate Policy](#) implementing new *Workers' Compensation Act* amendments requiring employers to stay in touch with injured workers throughout the return-to-work process and offer suitable work when the workers return or face risk of penalties. Effective date: July 15, 2025.

Action Point: Find out about the [workers' comp re-employment rules](#) in each part of Canada.

Environmental

May 14: Nova Scotia added 4 minerals to its critical minerals list (which now totals

20): high purity silica used for solar panels and semiconductors, silver used for solar panels and thermoelectric devices, tellurium used for solar panels and thermoelectric devices, and uranium used for nuclear energy and health applications. It also created a new list of 4 strategic minerals: aggregate used for construction of roads, buildings, concrete and landscaping, gold used for electronics, dentistry and finance (as currency or investment), gypsum used for drywall, plaster, cement and agriculture (as a soil conditioner), and potash used in fertilizer and industrial applications.

CASES

Workers' Comp: Anxiety Over Management Decisions Isn't Psychological Injury

A new case testing the limits of workers' comp coverage of gradual onset psychological injury involves a call centre recruiter who claimed she suffered stress as a result of being overworked when the company cut recruitment staff from 15 to 6. Adding to the stress was the '3CX' app that the centre used to enable candidates to call and text the recruiter at any time, which they often did, along with sending emails to her personal address. Some disappointed candidates even criticized her personally on the centre's Facebook page; others complained because she didn't speak French. But the Nova Scotia WCB denied the recruiter's claim citing WCB policy stating that workers' comp doesn't cover gradual onset or traumatic mental stress resulting from an employer's decisions or actions relating to the work or the worker's employment. The anxiety the recruiter experienced in this case stemmed from the centre's poor management decisions rather than direct action to intimidate, harass or bully her. The recruiter appealed but to no avail [[2025-48-AD \(Re\)](#), 2025 CanLII 49712 (NS WCAT), May 28, 2025].

Action Point: This is the second recent case addressing whether workers' comp covers psychological injury due to workload stress. While coverage was denied in this case, a March ruling from the Saskatchewan WCB went the other way in finding that stress from overworking is compensable. Find out about [workers' comp coverage](#) of gradual onset and traumatic mental stress.