

# Nova Scotia

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Return To Work

Jul 15: The Nova Scotia WCB [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 officially took effect.

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

### Work Injuries

Jul 9: The WCB reported that the 2025 time-loss injury rate has dropped to an all-time low of 1.31 per 100, as compared to 1.38 at the end of 2024. Injured workers missed about 246 days of work per 100 workers covered. Three quarters of workers hurt on the job returned to work within 90 days.

### Emergency Response

Jul 30: That's the final day to submit [applications](#) to the Nova Scotia Emergency Services Provider Fund for government funding of up to \$30,000 for fire departments, ground search and rescue teams and hazardous materials units to cover the costs of purchasing new PPE, communication, firefighting, rescue, and other safety equipment.

### New Laws

Jun 25: Under a new agreement, the Lebanese American University in Beirut will send 2 ready-to-practice family physicians to Nova Scotia per year over a 5-year period. The doctors will be required to sign a 3-year return-of-service agreement. The province will provide \$5 million to the University to fund 2 medical school residency positions per year, licensing exams, and immigration and relocation costs.

### Workplace Violence

Jun 10: Nova Scotia announced that it's creating a new engagement table dedicated to preventing gender-based violence in the province. The engagement table will be led by the Justice Minister and have up to 25 members who will meet at least once every 3 months to discuss how to prevent gender-based violence and support its victims.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement an effective [domestic violence prevention and response policy](#) at your workplace.

### Drugs & Alcohol

Jun 27: New free trade regulations allow residents to buy alcohol products from producers in provinces that have signed direct-to-consumer agreements with Nova

Scotia. The new regulations also mean that local alcohol producers will be able to sell directly to consumers in participating provinces.

**Action Point:** Find out how to use the [OHS Insider Substance Abuse Compliance Game Plan](#) to curb drugs and alcohol at your workplace.

### **Environmental**

Jun 13: Newly effective [phased application process rules](#) make it quicker and easier for metal mining operations to get government environmental approval for new projects. Metal mining projects in Nova Scotia need 2 approvals from the Department of Environment and Climate Change—an environmental assessment and an industrial approval. Some projects also need a water-related approval

### **Environmental**

Jun 27: The Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Energy Efficiency Innovation Fund is investing \$1.73 million for 22 projects to lower carbon emissions in the province's seafood sector. The projects range from electrifying vessels to installing solar systems.

## **CASES**

### **Discipline/Refusal/Retaliation: Reassigning Teacher to Different Classroom Isn't Reprisal for Safety Complaint**

A teacher worried about COVID complained about the quality of air ventilation in her classroom and asked the school principal install HEPA filters. After testing the air in the classroom and the one next to it, the school reassured her that the air was fine and rejected the request. The safety committee also reviewed the matter and decided not to recommend HEPA filters. But the teacher wasn't satisfied and renewed her request. Soon thereafter she got a negative performance review and the school reassigned her to a different classroom. Believing these actions to be reprisal for expressing safety concerns, filed a discrimination complaint to the OHS Division. The OHS investigators concluded that the negative review wasn't a reprisal but the reassignment was. The school appealed; and it won. The Nova Scotia Labour Board ruled that reassignment to a different classroom wasn't the kind of adverse employment decision that constitutes a reprisal, even though the teacher had taught in that classroom for 15 years and become emotionally attached to it. Her insistence on HEPA filters wasn't a demand that the school comply with OHS requirements because the air test results showed they were unnecessary. Last but not least, the school had a legitimate reason for the transfer, namely, to get the teacher away from the teacher in the adjacent classroom with whom she had an inter-personal conflict [[Halifax Regional Centre for Education v Gannett](#), 2025 NSLB 77 (CanLII), June 12, 2025].

**Action Point:** The key to this case is that the school didn't discipline the teacher. The more common scenario is when an employer does discipline a worker who's complained about safety or exercised another legitimate right, but the discipline is completely unrelated to that action. So, it's crucial to know how to [avoid reprisals](#)

liability when disciplining workers for safety violations.