

Federal

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Combustible Dusts

Jan 1: [Changes](#) aligning *Hazardous Product Regulations* hazard statement rules for combustible dusts with U.S. Safety Data Sheet regulations take effect. Currently, the required hazard statement for combustible dusts is: “May form combustible dust concentrations in air.” Under the new rules, the SDS can use either the original statement or a new version: “May form explosible dust-air mixture.”

Action Point: Find out about the 3 steps you should take to [protect workers from combustible dusts](#).

WHMIS

Dec 31: That’s the end of the transition period for complying with the new [GHS 7 WHMIS rules](#) revising the hazard information that must be listed on a Safety Data Sheet in Section 9, which describes a hazardous product’s physical and chemical properties, and Section 14 which lists transport information.

Action Point: You’ll need to do an [SDS inspection](#) to assess whether your current SDSs meet the new requirements and, if not, [get an updated version of the SDS from the](#) supplier of the product. Find out more about [the new SDS standards](#) and the 6 things you must do to comply, along with [templates of written requests](#) and [other records you’ll need to document compliance](#).

WHMIS

Jan 1: The transition period for complying with [new GHS 7 rules](#) for classification of certain hazardous products is over. Highlights: i. revised classification for flammable gases; ii. revised classification for aerosols; iii. new classification for chemicals under pressure; and iv. new criteria for classification in Specific Target Organ Toxicity – Single Exposure, Category 3.

Emergency Response

Nov 30: That’s the date when the federal government’s temporary waiver of application and biometric fees for foreign emergency services personnel who are coming to Canada to help fight wildfires is scheduled to end. Approximately 792 foreign emergency services personnel came to Canada to help fight wildfires in 2024.

Training

Oct 3: The federal government will provide the provinces and territories with another \$450 million of Labour Market Development Agreements support over the next 3 years to provide training programs for workers impacted by tariffs. Workers will get access to targeted training and financial assistance while training to keep their jobs or fill in-demand jobs. This is in addition to the previously announced \$120 million investment for steel and softwood lumber workers.

Action Point: Find out about [how tariffs will affect your OHS program](#).

Training

Sep 23: The federal government expanded funding for work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities for students with private sector employers via the Business + Higher Education Roundtable. Thanks to the new support, an additional 8,000 higher education students and 2,500 private employers will benefit from WIL programs over the next 3 years.

New Laws

Oct 9: [Bill C-3](#) providing for Canadian citizenship by descent by making all persons who were born outside the country citizens of Canada if one of their parents was a citizen before the law takes effect has been reported out of Committee. Going forward, citizenship by descent beyond the first generation would also be allowed for a Canadian parent who's been physically present in the country for at least 1,095 cumulative days (i.e., 3 years) before their child's birth or adoption.

Action Point: Find out [whether you must provide multilingual safety training](#) to your workers.

New Laws

Oct 6: In fiscal year 2024–2025, ESDC conducted 1,435 employer Temporary Foreign Worker inspections, finding 10% of employers non-compliant. During the same period, penalties more than doubled from \$2,067,750 to \$4,882,500 and resulted in 36 employers being banned from the TFW Program, a threefold increase from last year. Penalties included a \$1 million fine and 10-year ban against an employer in the fish and seafood sector.

New Laws

Oct 8: First Reading for [Bill C-12](#) proposing a wide range of new legal measures to strengthen Canadian border security and prevent the flow of illegal drugs, human trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime.

Workplace Harassment

Oct 1: Second Reading for [Bill C-9](#) making it a crime to wilfully promote hatred against any identifiable group by displaying certain symbols in a public place or intentionally obstruct or intimidate a person from attending a mosque or other public place of religious worship and repealing the requirement that the Attorney General consent to the prosecution of hate propaganda offences.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Workplace Violence

Sep 18: Newly tabled [Bill C-225](#) amends the *Criminal Code* to create new offences for engaging in intimate partner violence and ban peace officers from releasing persons arrested for an intimate partner offence if they've committed such an offence in the last 5 years or are at large on a release order for such an offence.

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

Workplace Violence

Sep 23: In response to the spate of assaults on healthcare workers, the House of Commons tabled [Bill S-233](#) amending the *Criminal Code* to require a court to consider the fact that the victim of an assault is a person who provides health services or a first responder to be an aggravating circumstance for the purposes of sentencing.

Environmental

Sep 22: First Reading for [Bill C-244](#) banning the owner of a vessel from transferring ownership of it to a person, knowing that—or in reckless disregard as to whether—the transferee lacks the ability, resources or intent to maintain, operate or dispose of the vessel in a manner that prevents it from becoming wrecked, abandoned, or hazardous.

CASES

Work Refusal: General Fears of COVID Don't Justify 'Frivolous' Work Refusal

A government worker ordered to return to the office at least twice a week after the pandemic initiated a work refusal citing fears of catching COVID. The employer, JHSC, and government OHS investigator found no danger, but the worker wouldn't back down and took his case to court. After losing at trial, he appealed to the Federal Court of Appeal, which upheld the ruling that the refusal was "frivolous" and based on "speculative and hypothetical" fears that ignored the employer's infection control measures. The Court also noted that the worker didn't claim "that his workplace was subject to any specific [COVID] risk greater than the risk elsewhere in the government or society in general" [[Juzda v. Canada \(Attorney General\)](#)], 2025 FCA 181 (CanLII), October 7, 2025].

Action Point: While the case involves COVID, these principles apply equally to influenza, measles, or any other infectious illnesses that may lead to an OHS work refusal. Go to the OHS Insider site for an [explanation of the ground rules](#) that courts and regulators use to determine whether an infectious illness work refusal is justified.

Privacy: Bus Company's New AI Drivers' Surveillance System Is Too Intrusive

The most recent case challenging the use of surveillance cameras inside company vehicles to ensure safe driving went in the union's favour. The main reason was AI. The federal arbitrator ruled that the newly installed AI-based Samsara system gathered much more extensive personal data than the conventional video cameras the company had previously used and that the resulting harms to drivers' Charter privacy rights outweighed the relatively minor improvements to safety. Moreover, the AI system's remote real-time viewing and other features allowed the company to use the system to gather and access data for purposes other than safety. Result: The company had to stop using the system within 90 days and pay \$100 in privacy damages to each affected driver [[STT de Coach Canada - CSN v Newcan Coach Company ULC \(Coach Canada\)](#)], 2025 CanLII 96672 (CA SA), August 29, 2025].

Action Point: Find out about [the 11 ways you can use](#) Artificial Intelligence to improve workplace safety and OHS compliance without trampling on workers'

privacy rights.