

Federal

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHMIS

Jan 1: January 1st is the final deadline 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: That's the deadline to comply with [new GHS 7 rules](#) for classification of certain hazardous products. 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.

Combustible Dusts

Jan 1: That's when [changes](#) to *Hazardous Product Regulations* hazard statement rules for combustible dusts 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 explosive dust-air mixture."

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

Fall Protection

Oct 15: A new government [Workplace Hazard Alert](#) warns of the dangers associated with working at heights, citing the following federally regulated sectors as continuing to experience a high incidence of disabling injuries due to falls from heights: longshoring, road transport, telecommunications and air transport.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Fall Protection Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Infectious Illness

Nov 10: The Pan American Health Organization notified the federal government that Canada no longer holds measles elimination status. Canada is experiencing a [large, multi-jurisdictional outbreak of measles](#) that began in October 2024 with cases in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Québec, Saskatchewan, and the Northwest Territories. While transmission has slowed recently, the outbreak has persisted for over 12 months,

primarily within under-vaccinated communities. Canada can re-establish its measles elimination status once transmission of the measles strain associated with the current outbreak is interrupted for at least 12 months.

Action Point: Find out how to use the [OHS Insider Infection Exposure Control Plan](#) template to guard against measles and other potential infectious illness outbreaks at your workplace.

New Laws

Nov 10: Ottawa announced plans to invest \$98.2 million over 5 years, starting in 2026-27, and \$9.8 million ongoing, to implement its recently announced Buy Canadian Policy across all federal departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. The plan also calls for another \$79.9 million over 5 years to support the Small and Medium Business Procurement Program creating procurement streams for Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises bidding for federal contracts, starting in the defense sector.

New Laws

Nov 4: Newly proposed Budget 2025 earmarks \$97 million, over 5 years, starting in 2026-27, for the launch of a Foreign Credential Recognition Action Fund to help internationally trained workers get quicker recognition so they can ply their trade in Canada, particularly in the healthcare and construction sectors.

New Laws

Nov 4: The new federal Budget 2025 includes \$75 million over 3 years, starting in 2026-27, to expand the Union Training and Innovation Program (UTIP) to support union-led apprenticeship training in Red Seal trades via equipment upgrades and “innovative projects” to reduce barriers for under-represented groups.

New Laws

Nov 4: The federal government’s newly tabled Budget 2025 calls for the creation of a temporary 5-year Personal Support Workers Tax Credit of 5% of eligible income up to \$1,100 per year support. The new tax credit will be available in provinces and territories that aren’t covered by a bilateral agreement with the federal government to increase wages for personal support workers.

New Laws

Oct 17: The federal government announced 3 new measures to support businesses affected by U.S. tariffs: i. current exemption from Canadian countermeasures for importing U.S. goods used in manufacturing, processing, or food and beverage packaging extended for 2 more months, and expanded to include goods used in agricultural production; ii. 2-month extension of exemption on imported U.S. goods used to support public health, health care, public safety and national security; and iii. further relief from Canadian tariffs on U.S. and China imports for companies can prove they’re subject to short supply, existing contractual obligations, or other adverse conditions.

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

New Laws

Oct 1: The U.S. government began imposing a new \$350 (CA) Visa Integrity Fee on Canadians entering the country for business or personal travel. While most Canadian citizens won't be affected because they don't need non-immigrant visas to get into the U.S., the Fee may affect those who do, including permanent residents, students or foreign workers in Canada. The Fee is refundable but only upon visa expiration; it's also expected to take years for the U.S. State Department to establish an actual refund process.

New Laws

Oct 23: Second 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.

New Laws

Nov 6: [Bill C-3](#), which provides 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, passed the House of Commons and is now in the Senate. Under the Bill, 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.

Workplace Harassment

Oct 1: On October 1st, the Second Reading for [Bill C-9](#) will occur, 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.

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: Domestic violence can happen not just at home but the victim's workplace. Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Plan](#) to protect your own workers.

Workplace Violence

Oct 29: In response to the spate of assaults on healthcare workers, the Senate passed [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. The Bill is now in the House of Commons.

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

Environmental

Nov 9: The Government of Canada unveiled a new Climate Competitiveness Strategy to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy. Key elements of the Strategy include strengthening of industrial carbon pricing, tax credits for clean economy investments, support for critical mineral projects and clarification of greenhouse gas emissions reduction regulations.

CASES

Drugs & Alcohol: Drug Test Refusal Is Grounds to Deny EI Benefits Even If Worker Was Justified

An employee who got fired for refusing to take a drug test filed for EI benefits. The Social Security Tribunal denied the claim because he lost his job due to misconduct. While admitting that he deliberately refused his employer's demand to be tested, the employee claimed his refusal was justified because the company violated the testing policy. But the federal court rejected his appeal, finding that the Tribunal acted reasonably in determining that the standard for misconduct denial of EI benefits is not that an employee do something wrong but that they engage in conduct that's willful [[Gould v. Canada \(Attorney General\)](#)], 2025 FCA 191 (CanLII), October 23, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Drugs and Alcohol Testing Policy](#) at your workplace.