



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Laws

Dec 17: Québec extended the suspension of new applications for collective sponsorship of refugees abroad until December 31, 2029, and the suspension of Labour Market Impact Assessment applications for Montreal and Laval under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program until December 31, 2026. A new French language proficiency requirement for temporary foreign workers renewing their applications after 3 years also took effect.

Industry Challenges

Dec 3: Québec public sector employees who've been working remotely must return to the office for at least 3 days per week by the end of January. The government also announced plans to cut 5,000 full-time equivalent positions by the end of the 2027 fiscal year. The current recruitment and hiring freeze will remain in effect, with the exception of Santé Québec, government networks and businesses.

Workers' Compensation

Mar 15: March 15th is the deadline for Québec employers to submit their workers' compensation data payroll reports to CNESST listing actual 2025 payroll expenses and estimated expenses for 2026 to avoid the risk of potential late fees, interest and penalties.

Action Point: Find out how much each province and territory is charging for [workers' compensation premiums in 2026](#).

Environmental

Jan 24: Comments closed on [proposed regulatory changes](#) that would speed up environmental impact assessments by requiring the Québec Ministry of Environment to submit its recommendations to the government within 9 months after the impact study is filed, as opposed to 13 to 18 months under current laws. The regulations also alter the order of steps, procedures and other timeframes of the environmental assessment process in accordance with new *Environmental Quality Act* amendments passed in May 2025.

Environmental

Jan 14: The Ministry of the Environment launched consultations on [proposed regulations](#) requiring owners of large commercial, institutional and multi-residential buildings like hospitals, schools, office towers, and apartment buildings to report the sources and quantities of the energy their buildings consume and greenhouse gases they emit. Mandatory declaration will be implemented gradually, starting in 2027 for commercial buildings of at least 5,000 m², multi-residential buildings of 50 units and more, and all State buildings, regardless of size. Reporting will start in 2028 for commercial buildings of at least 2,000 m² and multi-residential buildings of 25 units and more. Deadline to comment: February 27.

Environmental

Jan 1: More users will have to pay Water Use Regulations (RREUE) water use charges now that Québec lowered the threshold for payment requirements from 75,000 to 50,000 litres of water per day. Water users whose activities are subject to the RREUE fee will receive an invoice in spring 2027 based on the volumes they declare during 2026.

CASES

Workplace Harassment: Manager Who Harassed Deaf Subordinate Gets Reinstated

Hydro-Québec fired a first-level manager for making inappropriate jokes, denigrating remarks, and displaying “a discriminatory, disrespectful, and authoritarian attitude” towards a worker with a hearing impairment. The Labour Tribunal (TAT) found the penalty excessive and reduced it to a 4-week suspension. HQ appealed, contending that TAT overlooked aggravating factors like the manager’s previous offences, lack of remorse and position of responsibility. But it proved to be in vain when the court concluded that the TAT acted reasonably in reinstating the manager. “When conducting reasonableness review, courts must pay ‘respectful attention’ to the administrative decision-maker’s reasons and be cautious about substituting their own view of the proper outcome” [[*Hydro-Québec v. Administrative Labour Tribunal*](#), 2026 QCCS 40 (CanLII), January 8, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site that provides for prompt, fair, and thorough investigation of harassment complaints.

Training: Failure to Provide Adequate LOTO Training Results in Shorter Suspension

Following its regular progressive discipline protocols, a paper mill suspended a “fifth hand” who had already been suspended 1 week for a lockout tagout violation for another 4 weeks after she committed a second LOTO offence. The union pushed for a 2-week suspension, arguing that the company was following its progressive discipline schedule too mechanically without considering mitigating factors. The violations were committed accidentally by a hand who was new to the job and had received only 15 minutes of training in the circumstances involved, the union argued. The Québec arbitrator split the difference settling on a 3-week suspension. The LOTO violations were very serious and dangerous; however, “practicing for 15 minutes on a case containing various valves is hardly sufficient” [[*Unifor, Local 50Q v. Resolute Forest Products Inc. \(Kénogami Mill\)*](#), 2025 CanLII 128564 (QC SAT), December 11, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Lockout and Hazardous Energy Control Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site that ensures workers get the training OHS laws require.