

Ontario

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noise Hazards

Jan 30: Comments closed on [proposed changes](#) to WSIB workers' compensation hearing loss coverage rules (Policy T6-01-04, Noise-Induced Hearing Loss). Highlights: i. Make 26.25 dB loss the minimum threshold for initial entitlement to align with permanent impairment requirements; ii. Remove the presbycusis (aging) deduction factor; and iii. Clarify that the noise exposure threshold (NET) is 90 dBA exposure for 5 years, or the equivalent.

Action Point: Find out how to use the OHSI [Noise Control & Hearing Conservation Program template](#) to protect your workers from hazardous noise exposure.

First Aid

Feb 1: The WSIB is now accepting [applications](#) for automated external defibrillator reimbursement under new OHS rules making AEDs mandatory at certain Ontario construction project sites. Reimbursement will cover up to \$2,500 of one AED purchased between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2027 per eligible construction site. Deadline to apply: July 31, 2027.

Action Point: Find out more about the [new Ontario AEDs regulations](#) and how to implement an [AEDs Compliance Game Plan](#) to save lives at your workplace.

New Laws

Mar 2: That's the deadline to comment on new "Buy Ontario" public procurement [regulations](#) authorizing provincial government agencies, municipalities and local boards to give preference to Ontario companies in awarding contracts for light duty fleet vehicles and major infrastructure construction projects.

Industry Challenges

Feb 2: Comments closed on a [proposal](#) to amend the Ontario *Employment Standards Act* to make contractors liable for the failure of subcontractors to pay their workers' wages for performing the subcontracted work. Just how big is the non-payment problem in construction and what, if anything, should the government do about it, the MOL wants to know.

New Laws

Jan 13: Ontario will invest \$242 million to upgrade learning facilities at publicly funded colleges and universities across the province to bolster its pipeline of highly skilled workers by ensuring students have access to the latest equipment and state-of-the-art learning spaces. The investment includes \$209.3 million through the Facilities Renewal Program for facilities maintenance, repairs and upgrades, \$21.6 million through the College Equipment and Renewal Fund for purchase of instructional equipment and \$10.8 million through the Training Equipment and Renewal Fund for universities to renew and buy state-of-the-art equipment.

New Laws

Jan 31: The federal government announced that it's investing \$7.5 million through the [Strategic Response Fund](#) (SRF) to help paper mill Kap Paper Inc. complete a Front End Engineering Design study on the feasibility of creating a new medium-density fibreboard facility in Kapuskasing, Ontario, that would directly employ about 240 workers.

Privacy

Feb 9: February 9 is the deadline [to comment](#) on proposed regulations that would require acute care hospitals, school boards, children's aid societies and colleges and universities and other public sector entities to ensure that firms have taken specific measures to strengthen cyber security before awarding them contracts. Such required measures would include identifying points of contact for cyber security, submission of cyber security maturity assessment information and reporting on critical cyber security incidents.

Action Point: Find out how to create and implement an effective [Cyberbullying Prevention Policy](#) at your workplace.

Workers' Compensation

Mar 31: March 31 is the final day for Ontario Schedule 1 employers to submit their workers' compensation payroll reports listing their actual 2025 costs and projected costs for 2026 to the WSIB to avoid potential late fees, interest, and penalties. Keep in mind that employers who fail to pay workers' compensation premiums are now also subject to administrative monetary penalties.

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

Environmental

Feb 3: The Ontario Ministry of Environment ended public consultations on a [proposal](#) to exempt proponents from having to get Environmental Compliance Approvals, Permits to Take Water and other government environmental permissions for certain "low-risk" projects.

Environmental

Feb 2: Ontario says it's ready to take [applications](#) from companies interested in launching commercial-scale geologic carbon storage projects, which involve injecting captured carbon dioxide that would have otherwise entered the atmosphere into deep underground rock formations for permanent storage. Geologic carbon storage technology can help energy-intensive industries cut annual greenhouse gas emissions by five to seven million tonnes, while creating over 4,000 jobs and reducing costs for Ontario's industries by nearly \$1 billion.

Action Point: Find out about the [new federal geologic carbon storage environmental regulations](#).

CASES

Drugs & Alcohol: Safety-Sensitive Worker Who Smoked Pot on Lunch Break

Keeps His Job

A utility operator at a metal spraying facility got fired for returning to his safety-sensitive work high after smoking pot during his lunch break and then showing f-bomb insolence to the supervisor who told him he was suspended pending investigation of his marijuana use. The operator had been disciplined twice before, including a suspension for smoking what may have been marijuana in a no-smoking area. The Ontario arbitrator found just cause for discipline based on the supervisor's credible testimony that the operator's smelling like marijuana. But it reduced the penalty to a three-month suspension, without backpay, citing the operator's nine years of employment, productivity, acceptance of responsibility, and the fact that there was no actual safety injury or incident [[MSC Toronto O/a Continuous Colour Coat Limited v United Steelworkers Local 3950-65](#), 2026 CanLII 6010 (ON LA), January 30, 2026].

Action Point: Although that's not the reason the company lost, the employer would have had a much stronger case for termination had it generated stronger evidence of marijuana use than a supervisor's testimony that a worker smelled like pot. Find out how to implement a [Drugs and Alcohol Testing Policy](#) at your workplace.

Excavations: Failure to Provide Proper Emergency Exit Costs Piping Contractor \$140,000

A worker removing a hose from a pipe connection located in an access pit was exposed to hot water circulating in the water main. The victim tried to climb out of the pit but fell back in before managing to escape in a second attempt. The employer was fined \$140,000 for failing to ensure that adequate means of egress was provided for evacuating workers during an emergency. A supervisor was also fined \$7,000 for the same offence [[Fer-Pal Construction Ltd.](#), [MOL News Release](#), January 23, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a 10-step [Excavations Safety and Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace to prevent what happened to this company from happening to yours.

Powered Mobile Equipment: Fall from Scissor Lift Truck Results in Critical Injury, \$120,000 Fine

A mining worker fell from the deck of a MacLean Scissor Truck and suffered critical injuries. MOL investigators determined that crew members doing a pre-use inspection had noticed that the pin designed to secure the rear railing to the scissor deck was missing, but neither replaced the pin nor stopped the work. The crew also failed to remove muck or mining material from the access area over which the truck was to operate, making the ride bumpy and unstable. The employer pled guilty to failing to ensure that muck was cleared before work began underground, resulting in a \$120,000 fine [[Glencore Canada Corporation](#), [MOL News Release](#), February 3, 2026].

Action Point: Implementing an effective [Powered Mobile Equipment Operation Policy](#) like the one on the OHS Insider site can help you prevent such injuries and the 6-figure OHS fines they can lead to at your own workplace.

Discipline/Refusal/Retaliation: Worker Who Loses OHS Reprisal Claim Must Pay

Employer's Legal Costs

A grocery worker posted a 24-page diatribe on a social media site targeted to Chinese Canadians, the store's primary customer base, accusing the company of racism and discrimination. Management demanded that he take down the post by Nov. 27; he refused and was fired on the morning of Nov. 28. That same afternoon, he complained to the MOL about the store's failure to post required OHS workplace harassment and violence information. He also accused the company of reprisal for complaining to the MOL and engaging in union activity. The OLRB dismissed the complaint based on the store's 5 witnesses and "blatant falsehoods" in his own testimony. The Ontario court concluded that the Board's ruling was reasonable and the hearing fair. It also ordered the worker to pay the store \$7,500 in legal costs [[Cai Song v. Ontario Labour Relations Board](#), 2026 ONSC 165 (CanLII), January 14, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to implement an [OHS Work Refusals Response & Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.