

Ontario

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Apr 1: Ontario announced that it will increase the general minimum wage 35 cents to \$17.95 per hour on October 1, 2026, based on the 1.9 annual increase in the province's Consumer Price Index.

Action Point: Find out [how to avoid common payroll errors](#) when implementing minimum wage increases.

Wages & Salary

Mar 27: Ontario [published](#) the salaries of Public Service and broader public sector employees who were paid \$100,000 or more in 2025. The *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996* requires organizations that receive public funding from the province to make public, by March 31 each year, the names, positions, salaries and total taxable benefits of employees paid \$100,000 or more in the previous calendar year by March 31 of each year.

Payroll

Apr 14: Ontario announced that it plans to propose legislation called the *STAR Act* adding new language to the *Employments Standards Act* (ESA) to ban employers from charging employees for required uniforms. The ban would apply to uniforms that are mandatory, employer-specific, and not reasonably usable by employees outside of work, such as branded or logo apparel.

Action Point: Find out about the [8 important new payroll changes](#) that will affect your current year T4 filings and 2026 source deductions.

Employment Standards

Apr 15: If and when it's proposed, the new *STAR Act* banning uniform deductions will also include ESA changes to improve the transparency and oversight of talent agencies to protect the paycheques of performers in the entertainment industry.

New Laws

Apr 2: Ontario's new budget legislation ([Bill 97](#)) cuts the small business corporate income tax (CIT) from 3.2% to 2.2% over the next three years. The government claims that the 31.25% CIT rate cut will provide over 375,000 Ontario small businesses up to \$5,000 in tax relief each year.

Statutory Holidays

Apr 2: The [Bill 97](#) budget legislation includes a proposed change to the *Retail Business Holidays Act* that would allow retail business establishments to open on Victoria Day, provided they pay employees who work the day time-and-a-half premium pay, in addition to full public holiday pay. Retail employees would still have their ESA rights to refuse work on a public holiday.

Action Point: Find out how to avoid costly payroll mistakes and employment

standards violations by implementing a [Statutory Holiday Compliance Game Plan](#) at your company.

Labour Relations

Mar 25: The newly tabled *Anti-Scab Labour Act* ([Bill 96](#)) would ban employers from replacing striking or locked-out employees with replacement workers except in specified emergency situations. These prohibitions were originally incorporated into the *Labour Relations Act* in 1992 before being repealed three years later.

Labour Relations

Apr 17: The province and Association of Ontario Midwives (AOM) ratified a new three-year funding agreement under which midwives will receive a 7% wage increase. The agreement also provides for funding of up to \$8 million for Indigenous community-based midwifery projects, \$5 million to help midwifery practices manage day-to-day clinical operations, and \$2 million for the purchase of required equipment and furniture.

Privacy

Apr 11: New Digital Security [regulations](#) require Ontario public hospitals, schools, and other public sector entities to implement cyber security programs that include: i. appointment of employee primary points of contact; ii. annual cyber security maturity assessments; iii. submission of cyber security maturity assessment summaries; and iv. “critical cyber security incident” reporting. Effective date: July 1, 2026.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Data Breach Response & Damage Control Game Plan](#) to safeguard your company against cyberattack.

Privacy

Apr 2: Ontario’s new budget bill includes language to modernize the province’s protocols for public sector disclosure of personal information and sensitive data and response to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. However, the Ontario Information and Privacy Commission (IPC) warns that Schedule 7 of the Bill would “significantly limit public access to government records held by the premier, cabinet ministers, parliamentary assistants, and political staff, while also weakening privacy protections for Ontarians.”

Action Point: Find out how to guard against AI privacy, discrimination, and other liability risks by implementing a legally sound [workplace artificial intelligence use policy](#).

Employment Benefits

Apr 2: Key changes to the *Pension Benefits Act* contained in newly tabled [Bill 97](#): i. allow plans to transfer variable life benefits (VLBs) from a defined contribution account; ii. establishment of a death benefit payable to a designated beneficiary in respect of VLBs; iii. new rules for partial wind ups that terminate the part of a pension plan that provides VLBs; and iv. clarification that if the date of wind up is on or after March 26, 2026, an amount of a pension or pension benefit, including any bridging supplement, in excess of \$3,000 is not guaranteed by the Pension Benefits Guarantee Fund.

Employment Benefits

Apr 20: Comments closed on proposed regulations to implement legislation passed in 2025 (Bill 68) permitting the transfer of assets from and conversion of a defined contribution (DC) single employer pension plan (SEPP) to a jointly sponsored pension plan (JSPP). The regulations address notice requirements, conversion process timelines, completion report filings, and administrative monetary penalties for violations.

New Laws

Mar 30: Ontario signed a historic partnership agreement with the federal government providing for \$8.8 billion in joint funding over 10 years to support housing-enabling infrastructure investments for Ontario municipalities that reduce and maintain low development charges (DCs), as well as a Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) rebate to incentivize new home construction. The new infrastructure funding will offset much of the financial impact of DC reductions on municipalities.

Training

Apr 15: To support the province's commitment to grow the minerals and mining sector, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) announced that it will invest \$125 million to build a new, state-of-the-art Ontario Mine Rescue Training Institute in Sudbury. The 120-acre institute will deliver advanced, hands-on training in realistic underground and surface mining environments to over 540 mine rescue and fire responder volunteers each year.

Training

Mar 23: Newly tabled [Bill 93](#), aka *Truck Driver Training Schools Accountability Act*, would require Ontario government agents to inspect driving schools that provide truck driver (Class A) training programs and provide inspection reports to the Minister of Transportation who would then have to publish the inspection results.

Health & Safety

Mar 31: Ontario employers that receive administrative monetary penalties for an OHS violation must submit the new Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) Form A-154 to appeal the penalty. The government and any other party identified in the application or response, must then file its response within 21 calendar days before the scheduled hearing date.

Action Point: Find out how to survive [surprise government OHS inspections](#) that can result in administrative monetary penalties.

Health & Safety

Mar 31: Ontario says it's prepared for the 2026 wildland fire season that officially began on April 1 and lasts until October 31. In addition to hiring 68 new permanent staffers, the province has increased pay for wildland firefighters, pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, and other critical staff.

Workers' Compensation

Apr 13: Ontario announced that it will introduce legislation to increase WSIB Loss-of-Earnings (LOE) benefits from 85% to 90% of a worker's take-home pay. The bill will

also allow workers who choose to work past age 65 to continue receiving LOE benefits instead of having to forfeit them the way they do under the current rules. According to Statistics Canada, about 444,000 Ontarians aged 65 and older remained in the workforce in 2025 (about 5.4% of Ontario's labour force).

Workers' Compensation

Apr 9: Ontario will propose new legislation to extend mandatory workers' compensation coverage to all privately operated residential care facilities, retirement homes, and group homes. If and when the law passes, it will close a long-standing gap that has left 29,000 personal support workers, registered nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, and other frontline care workers without workers' compensation coverage.

Workers' Compensation

Apr 15: As expected, the Ontario Assembly defeated [Private Member Bill 86](#), an ambitious proposal to repeal the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* and replace it with a whole new fair compensation system called the *Meredith Act*.

CASES

Termination: Post-Employment Earnings Count Against Notice Even If Job Pays Less

A court ruled that a sales rep was wrongfully dismissed and awarded him 17 months' termination notice. Although the sales rep admitted to not seeking a sales job that paid as well as the one he lost, the court rejected the company's failure to mitigate claim due to its failure to produce evidence showing that such jobs were actually available. The court also refused to deduct the \$32,000 the rep did make from the new job because he earned it in "a lower-paying or ranking position." The Ontario Court of Appeal upheld the first part of the ruling but not the second. There's no rule saying that earnings from an inferior position aren't deductible in mitigation, the high court explained. Result: That money did count against the rep's 17 months' termination notice [[Williamson v. Brandt Tractor Inc.](#), 2026 ONCA 272 (CanLII), April 16, 2026].

Action Point: Find out about the [7 things](#) wrongfully dismissed employees must do to "mitigate" their damages.

Telecommuting: Full Time Return to Office Violates Disabled Employee's Accommodation Rights

The union claimed that a company violated its duty to make reasonable accommodations by ending the hybrid work arrangement of an analyst who had been diagnosed with chronic sleep disorders, anxieties, depression, and other severe disabilities. The company claimed that the analyst was fit to return to the office and that allowing him to continue working from home at least four days a week was an undue hardship, especially since he had flexible start and end hours. The Ontario arbitrator sided with the union based on the treating doctor's testimony that working in the office full time, while not completely beyond the analyst's capabilities,

would undermine the reliability of his work, at least until his current symptoms eased, which was more likely to happen if he be allowed to work from home a little longer. However, while hybrid work was a reasonable accommodation, the arbitrator reasoned that letting the analyst choose which day he came to the office was undue hardship and that management was entitled to make that decision so it could reasonably predict his work hours [[Ontario Power Generation v Power Workers' Union](#), 2026 CanLII 27365 (ON LA), March 24, 2026].

Action Point: Wrongful dismissal litigation by employees required to return to the office after working from home is becoming increasingly common. This case raises the question of whether ending tele- or hybrid work for a disabled employee violates the employer's duty to make reasonable accommodations. However, most cases involve constructive dismissal. Find out [how to end telecommuting arrangements](#) without committing constructive dismissal.

Infectious Illness: High Court Okays COVID Negligence Class Action Against Nursing Home

Seventy-three long-term care residents died of COVID during a six-week period in 2021. The victims and their families filed a class action lawsuit accusing the facility of gross negligence in failing to properly plan and implement policies and procedures to respond to the COVID pandemic. The lower court concluded that there were enough common legal issues, including whether the facility's failure to protect the residents amounted to gross negligence, to justify allowing the case to go forward as a class action. The Ontario Court of Appeal upheld the ruling. In addition to having to now face a class action, the facility was ordered to pay \$35,000 to cover the legal costs of the appeal [[Head v. 859530 Ontario Inc.](#), 2026 ONCA 231 (CanLII), March 31, 2026].

Action Point: This is a very concerning case for employers to the extent it signals that the door may be open to private lawsuits, including class actions, for negligently failing to prevent people at the worksite or facility against COVID-19 and other infections. Find out how to create a legally and clinically sound workplace [Exposure Control Plan](#) to protect your employees against the risk of COVID and other infectious illnesses.