

JUNE 2023 MONTH IN REVIEW

British Columbia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Jun 1: BC increased its general minimum wage by \$1.10 to \$16.75 per hour, one of the highest in Canada. The same 6.9% inflation adjustment applies to separate minimum wages for residential caretakers, live-in home support workers and camp leaders.

Action Point: Find out more about the latest round of [minimum wage increases](#) taking effect across Canada

Statutory Holidays

May 11: BC officially adopted [Bill 24](#) amending the *Employment Standards Act* to ensure that all unionized employees get the newly recognized National Day for Truth and Reconciliation stat holiday regardless of the terms of their current collective agreement.

Action Point: Use the resources on the HRI [Statutory Holiday](#) Compliance Centre to avoid stat holiday violations at your workplace

Pay Equity

May 11: [Bill 13](#) establishing pay transparency in BC has received Royal Assent. It requires employers to, among other things, include pay information in job ads, refrain from asking job applicants about their pay history or taking reprisals against employees for discussing their pay and publishing annual pay transparency reports.

Action Point: Find out more about [pay equity laws](#) and their practical impact on

operations

Labour Relations

May 11: Newly adopted [Bill 5](#) amends the BC *Public Service Labour Relations Act* to include practicing lawyers and articled students as “employees” covered by the law unless they’re employed in the Criminal Justice Branch, the Office of Legislative Counsel or as a member of the staff of a court.

New Laws

May 11: SkilledTradesBC unveiled a new process for identifying potential trades to be designated for skilled trades certification. Trades seeking certification under the new process have until June 30 to [submit an application](#).

Immigration

May 23: BC announced plans to more than quadruple funding for settlement services under the BC Settlement and Integration Services Program (BCSIS) from \$6 million to \$25.6 million per year.

Privacy

May 4: BC sent letters to Twitter, Tinder, Meta, Grindr, PornHub and other social media companies of their duties to immediately stop distribution or remove intimate images that were posted without the subject’s consent from their platform or face court orders, fines and other penalties under newly passed [Bill 12](#), the *Intimate Images Protection Act*.

Action Point: Protect your organization from [revenge porn and cyberbullying liability](#)

Health and Safety

Jun 19: That’s the deadline to comment on [proposed changes](#) to BC OHS Regulations (Part 5) requiring employers to implement a plan for responding to emergencies involving a hazardous substance, both within and outside the workplace. Employers will first have to perform a risk assessment and develop written procedures that go beyond simple evacuation, such as sheltering in place. Employers will have to train workers in the plan and conduct regular drills to test

plan effectiveness.

Workers Comp

May 1: WorkSafeBC [regulations](#) establishing the rules, procedures and bylaws of the newly created Fair Practices Commissioner officially took effect.

CASES

Workplace Harassment: Top Court Refuses to Hammer WCB for Mishandling Harassment Case

A court overturned the WCB Appeal Board's decision to dismiss the complaint of a guest service agent who claimed her employer tolerated the harassment, bullying and "mobbing" or false complaints she suffered at the hands of her coworkers. Unsatisfied with the victory and vindication, the agent asked the court to issue an order admonishing the Board for not properly handling her complaint. The court refused and the agent took her case to the province's highest court. **Result:** The BC Court of Appeal tossed the appeal, noting that courts have wide discretion to decide whether to issue "declaratory relief" and supporting the lower court's determination that issuing such an order would have served little useful purpose in this case [[Pereira v. British Columbia \(Workers' Compensation Board\)](#), 2023 BCCA 195 (CanLII), May 2, 2023].

Action Point: Use the resources on the [Harassment Compliance Centre](#) to prevent harassment and bullying at your workplace