

OCTOBER 2024 MONTH IN REVIEW

Saskatchewan

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Oct 1: Saskatchewan became the last province in Canada to achieve a \$15 per hour minimum wage, thanks to a \$1.00 increase that took effect today. But Saskatchewan is still tied with Alberta for the lowest minimum wage in the country.

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

Immigration

Sep 1: Immigration law changes took effect: Administrative penalties of up to \$200,000 for individuals and \$400,000 for corporations; Eligibility requirements for immigration consultants, recruiters, and employers recruiting internationally; iii. Code of conduct for employers and foreign worker recruiters; and Application fees for foreign worker recruiter or immigration consultant license of \$300 for new licenses and \$50 for renewal.

Action Point: Find out the 10 things you need to know if you hire [temporary foreign workers](#).

Immigration

Aug 30: Saskatchewan created 2 new pathways under its Immigrant Nominee Program targeting sectors in great need of labour: agriculture and healthcare. The pathways are called the Agriculture Talent Pathway and the Health Talent Pathway.

Labour Relations

Sep 24: eHealth Saskatchewan and the General Employees' Union (SGEU) Local 1579 ratified a new 3-year collective agreement providing for annual wage increases of 3%, 3%, and 1.67%, retroactive to Oct. 1, 2022. The union represents about 650 employees, most of whom provide IT and related support to the health system province-wide.

Workers' Comp

Sep 1: The Saskatchewan WCB issued a new policy ([PRO-10/2024](#)) setting out guidelines and procedures for workers' comp payment of fees for services provided by physicians for treating work-related injuries and illnesses.

CASES

Telecommuting: No Proof that Ex-Telecommuter Still Had Company's Laptop

What would you do if you discovered that an ex-employee who used to work from home hadn't returned the company's laptop, cellphone, and chequebook? The employer in this case, a nonprofit organization, went to court to try to get the missing items back from its former community director. The problem was that it couldn't prove that the director actually still had those items in her possession. The organization's evidence was circumstantial while the director's testimony rebutting the allegation was "credible and reliable". And since the organization, as employer, had the burden of proof, the Saskatchewan court dismissed the case and ordered it to pay the director's legal costs [[Fransaskoise Community Association of Moose Jaw Inc. v Dourlent](#), 2024 SKPC 28 (CanLII), July 26, 2024].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [legally sound telecommuting policy](#) at your workplace.

Drugs & Alcohol: No Reasonable Grounds to Make Workers Submit to Post-Incident Drug Testing

An arbitrator ruled that an energy company violated its unilaterally imposed drug testing of safety-sensitive workers after "significant work-related incidents." The incidents in this case weren't significant enough, the arbitrator found. Citing case law, it also faulted the company for not undertaking "some form of investigation or 'line of inquiry' to determine whether testing might reasonably be required to rule out impairment by drugs or alcohol as a contributing factor." The company appealed but the Saskatchewan court concluded that the arbitrator's ruling was reasonable and refused to overturn it [[Saskenergy Incorporated v Unifor Local 649](#), 2024 SKKB 160 (CanLII), September 9, 2024].

Action Point: Find out [how to create a legally sound drug testing policy](#) at your workplace.