

## December 2024 MONTH IN REVIEW

# Manitoba

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Leaves of Absence

Newly passed [Bill 9](#) increases serious injury leave from 17 to 27 weeks. As before, to be eligible employees must have worked for the same employer for at least 90 days and furnish a physician certificate verifying that they're incapable of being at work for at least 2 weeks due to serious illness or injury.

### New Laws

The Manitoba Assembly passed reform [Bill 16](#) requiring the provincial government to publish an annual report on all of its regulatory accountability initiatives during the year.

### Discrimination

Manitoba created a new working group to spearhead efforts to combat Islamophobia in the province's kindergarten to Grade 12 education system. Mirroring national trends, incidents of Islamophobia in schools have increased in Manitoba over the past year.

### Immigration

The province is partnering with 7 rural municipalities and the Gambler First Nation to launch a new 3-year pilot project to help west-central Manitoba employers deal with labour market and succession planning needs. The West-Central Immigration Initiative program will work toward ensuring that the region's 85 employers get the 240 to 300 people they're expected to need to meet their labour needs over the next 3 years.

### Health & Safety

Manitoba officially re-established the Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health that the previous government abolished in 2018. The Council will be made up of 13 members representing workers, employers, technical and professional bodies who will advise the government on OHS matters.

**Action Point:** Find out [how to create a vibrant safety culture](#) at your company.

## Workplace Violence

Nov 7: Newly passed [Bill 39](#) bans the sale of machetes and other long-bladed weapons to anyone under age 18 in Manitoba. *The Long-Bladed Weapon Control Act* also requires retailers to collect photo ID from purchasers and maintain records on each purchase for at least 2 years.

**Action Point:** Find out about the 10 things you must do to [prevent workplace violence](#).

## Drugs & Alcohol

Nov 6: The federal government proposed [regulations](#) allowing Manitoba to participate in the new national coordinated system of excise taxes on vaping products manufactured in or imported into Canada. This means that Manitoba will be allowed to impose additional duties on vaping products at the federal rate, starting in 2025.

**Action Point:** Find out how to [effectively control substance abuse](#) at your workplace.

## CASES

### Immigration: Court Upholds Denying Registration to Foreign Worker Recruiting Firm

The Director of Employment Standards refused to renew the registration of a foreign worker recruiting firm after a government inspector found evidence that it required foreign workers to make undocumented cash payments back to it each month. The firm denied the allegations and challenged the denial. But the Manitoba court refused to budge. The *Worker Recruitment and Protection Act* doesn't allow foreign worker recruiting agencies to appeal registration denials to the courts. And even if it did, the court continued, "I would be extremely reluctant" to second guess the Director's registration decisions given its "expertise in foreign worker recruitment and protection and in employment standards administration and enforcement generally" [[Razir Transport Services Ltd. v. The Director of Employment Standards](#), 2024 MBKB 157 (CanLII), October 25, 2024].