



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Labour Relations

Dec 6: Public consultations began on proposed legislation ([Bill 88](#)) that would change the rules for settling collective agreement disputes involving municipal police officers and firefighters by requiring that negotiation disputes be referred to an arbitrator rather than a dispute settlement composed of members appointed by the Government of Québec.

New Laws

Jan 23: In a bid to ensure that all residents have health care coverage by summer 2026, Québec asked a committee of independent experts to provide scientific recommendations on how the province should reorganize its front-line health and social services. The committee report is due on March 31.

Training

Jan 17: CNESST began accepting [applications](#) from organizations wishing to participate in a new program called PAOSST offering financial assistance of up to \$100,000 for carrying OHS and workplace injury prevention training and education projects.

Health & Safety

Dec 26: Newly posted CNESST [Draft OHS Regulations](#) specify that compressed breathing air for supplied-air respirators or self-contained respiratory protective apparatuses must meet CSA Standard CSA Z180.1, which is the latest version of the standard. The revised compressed breathing air requirement applies to all sectors, including mining.

Action Point: Find out what to do when [employee religious rights create a safety hazard](#).

Workers' Comp

Mar 15: That's the deadline for Québec employers to submit their workers' comp data payroll reports to CNESST listing actual 2024 payroll expenses and estimated expenses for 2025 to avoid the risk of potential late fees, interest and penalties.

CASES

Workplace Harassment: Butt Touching Costs Senior Mine Mechanic His Job

The union grieved the termination of a mine maintenance mechanic for touching the buttocks of a student worker on repeated occasions including her final day of

work. The Québec arbitrator ruled that the employer had just cause to terminate, even though the mechanic had no history of discipline in the 27 years he worked for the mine and had apologized to the victim. The mechanic's denials were implausible, his apology was insincere and the nonconsensual touching of a young woman was a serious and unacceptable offence, especially in a predominately male work environment [[Union of Metalworkers, Local 6869 v. Arcelormittal](#), 2025 CanLII 2429 (QC SAT), January 7, 2025].

Action Point: Having a strong workplace harassment policy enabled the company in this case to justify terminating the mechanic, especially given his clean disciplinary record. Use the HR Insider [sexual harassment policy template](#) to review and improve your own policy in case you find yourself in this situation.

Absenteeism: 36 Months Is Long Enough to Wait for Disabled Employee to Return

Under the terms of a collective agreement, employees may be terminated after 36 months of being on indefinite leave with a disability. In accordance with the clause, an employer closed the file of a recreation technician on leave with 22 disabilities. The union objected but the Québec arbitrator rejected the grievance, noting that courts in the province accept that 36 months is generally a reasonable accommodation as long as the employee has no reasonably foreseeable prospects of being capable of returning to work any time soon. And the medical evidence in this case demonstrated that the technician wouldn't be able to resume working within a reasonable time [[Alliance of Professional Health and Social Services Personnel \(APTS\) v. Integrated Health and Social Services Center Montérégie-Centre](#), 2025 CanLII 714 (QC SAT), January 10, 2025].

Action Point: This case is in line with case rulings in not only Québec but most jurisdictions on the question of [how long](#) an employer must wait for disabled employees who show no reasonable indications of improvement in the near future to return from extended absences.

Health & Safety: Truck Driver, Not Truck Company Must Pay Traffic Fine

A truck driver sued his employer for the fines and legal fees he had to pay at the border for trying to enter the U.S. with a load exceeding the weight allowed under trucking regulations. The employer blamed the driver for the entire mess, noting that he wouldn't have gotten into trouble had he stuck to the conventional route where the border cross weight limit was much higher. The Court of Québec sided with the employer and dismissed the case. "As a road professional," the driver was responsible for ensuring that he complied with the regulations regarding loads and dimensions on the roads he drove [[Deschamps v. Transport Norvinic inc.](#), 2024 QCCQ 7776 (CanLII), December 20, 2024].