

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Jan 29: At \$1.30 per hour, it's the largest minimum wage increase in Nova Scotia history and will be implemented over 2 stages in 2025, starting on April 1, when the minimum wage will rise 50 cents to \$15.70 per hour. On October 1, the minimum wage will increase another 80 cents to \$16.50 per hour.

Minimum Wage

Feb 21: Newly tabled [Private Member Bill 29](#), which is highly unlikely to pass, proposes to amend the *Labour Standards Code* to require employers to pay employees a "living wage." Any reduction or discontinuance of a benefit, privilege, or other employment term would be deemed a wage reduction that the employer would have to offset.

Leaves of Absence

Feb 19: Nova Scotia is increasing paid domestic violence leave from 3 to 5 days, effective April 1. To be eligible, employees must have at least 3 months of service. Eligible employees are also entitled to up to 16 continuous weeks of domestic violence leave and 5 additional unpaid days, which may be continuous or intermittent.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Domestic Violence Leave Compliance Game Plan](#) along with a [Leave Policy template](#) that you can tailor to meet the new Nova Scotia rules.

New Laws

Feb 25: First of its kind legislation, [Bill 36](#), *The Free Trade and Mobility within Canada Act*, which is through First Reading, would pave the way for Nova Scotia to enter into reciprocity trade agreements with other provinces under which the goods manufactured and produced in those provinces would be treated the same as those produced locally in Nova Scotia. Reciprocity would also apply to professional certifications and licenses.

New Laws

Feb 20: Nova Scotia beef producers can now get financial protection through the Maritime Livestock Price Insurance Pilot Program. Under this new regional initiative slated to run until March 26, producers may purchase price protection on beef cattle in the form of an insurance policy to protect against unexpected market declines. The federal government and participating provinces will share the costs of administering the Program.

New Laws

Feb 24: The Government of Canada announced that it will pony up \$34.1 million to upgrade, reconstruct, repair, and ensure the safety of wharfs and other critical

harbour infrastructure including electrical upgrades in 4 Nova Scotia Harbours: Louisbourg, Glace Bay, Upper Whitehead, and Grand Étang.

Employment Benefits

Feb 5: Newly proclaimed legislation gives private sector employees the right to apply to join one of Nova Scotia's largest public pension plans, the Public Service Superannuation Plan (PSSP). New regulations set out the rules employers must follow to request transferring an existing pension plan into the PSSP, including the requirement that proposed transfers be voted on by existing plan members and be approved by the Superintendent of Pensions.

New Laws

Jan 31: The federal government's Community Futures Program will provide over \$3.5 million in funding to enable 13 Community Business Development Corporations (CBDs) in Nova Scotia to offer financial assistance, specialized training, expert guidance, and other support for small and rural businesses.

Health & Safety

Feb 6: There were 20 workplace fatalities in Nova Scotia in 2024, versus 18 in 2023, WCB reported. Eight fatalities were from traumatic injury (one more than 2023 but one below 5-year averages), 6 from occupational illness from past exposure (versus 9 in 2023), and 6 from heart attack, stroke, or other health-related event (versus 2 in 2023).

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

Workers' Comp

Mar 31: That's the deadline for Nova Scotia employers to submit their workers' comp payroll reports to the WCB listing their actual numbers from 2024 and projected numbers for 2025 to avoid potential late fees, interest, and penalties.