

# Northwest Territories

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Discrimination

Apr 1: The GNWT rescinded its affirmative action policy and began implementing a new [Indigenous Employment Policy](#) establishing preferred hiring status for public service positions for Indigenous peoples, primarily recognized members or descendants of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit peoples indigenous to the Northwest Territories. Such peoples who come from outside the territory will get secondary consideration.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement an effective [diversity, equity, and inclusion policy](#) at your workplace.

### New Laws

Mar 4: The GNWT says it's taking measures in response to the Trump tariffs, including reviewing procurement policies to reduce or eliminate purchases from U.S. companies where possible and halting the Northwest Territories Liquor and Cannabis Commission's purchase of American goods.

### New Laws

Mar 6: The GNWT officially enacted the *Practice of Engineering, Geoscience, and Applied Science Technology Act*, modernizing the regulatory framework for engineering, geoscience, and applied science technology professionals in the NWT. Key changes include limited licenses for out-of-territory professionals, alignment of licensing requirements with other jurisdictions, a streamlined process for professionals returning from parental leave and supports professionals transitioning to full licensure and expanded options for addressing struggling engineers other than suspension.

### New Laws

Mar 13: The GNWT signed a new bilateral agreement with Ottawa that will provide the territories over \$7.8 million to improve access to selected new drugs for rare diseases, and to support enhanced access to existing drugs, early diagnosis, and screening. The first step will be funding to provide residents access to Poteligeo, for the treatment of mycosis fungoides or Sézary syndrome.

### New Laws

Apr 1: To account for inflation, the GNWT is imposing regulatory fees increases of roughly 4%, effective today. The fee increases will primarily impact Real Estate Agents, Real Estate Salespersons, Business Licences, Vendors, Direct Sellers, Collection Agencies, and Plan Reviews.

### Drugs & Alcohol

Mar 11: The Northwest Territories' share of the new \$32.5 billion national tobacco company litigation settlement will be approximately \$185 million, including an initial payment of around \$44 million and the remaining balance to be paid out over 18

years.

**Action Point:** Find out how to comply with [workplace smoking laws](#).

### New Laws

Mar 4: The federal government's decision to extend the Mineral Exploration Tax Credit for another 2 years is good news for the Northwest Territories given the METC's key role in supporting early-stage mineral exploration. However, the 3 territories continue to call for a 15% stackable North of 60 Mineral Exploration Tax Credit, an incentive designed to recognize the higher costs of exploration in the territories.

### Workers' Comp

Feb 28: Second Reading for significant workers' comp legislation ([Bill 21](#)) proposing changes to the formula for calculating long-term benefits of permanently injured workers. Under current rules, workers receive a lifetime pension if they have a "permanent medical impairment" or workplace injury causing a lasting loss of function after treatment or rehab based solely on the percentage of impairment experienced and earnings at the time of injury without consideration of impact on ability to return to their job. The Bill would replace lifetime pensions with a one-time lump sum payment for a permanent injury plus an ongoing benefit payment to compensate injured workers for lost earnings.