

Manitoba

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Laws

May 1: Manitoba's Budget 2025 provides approximately \$962 million in relief and support for businesses impacted by U.S. and Chinese tariffs, including \$122 million in workers' comp rebates and \$840 million in tax relief via a 3-month deferral of payments of the retail sales tax and health and post-secondary education tax levy covering February, March, and April tax returns.

Employment Benefits

May 15: The Pension Commission of Manitoba published a [consultation paper](#) identifying issues that will be on the table during its upcoming regular 5-year review of *The Pension Benefits Act*. Deadline to comment: June 25.

Discrimination

May 5: [Bill 43](#) proposing to add gender expression to the list of characteristics protected from employment and other forms of discrimination under Manitoba's *Human Rights Code* has been reported out of Committee and only 2 steps from passage.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [sexual orientation and transgender discrimination policy](#) at your workplace.

Discrimination

Apr 24: The Manitoba Assembly tabled but is unlikely to pass [Private Member Bill 214](#), *The Board Parity and Diversity Act*, banning the board of a corporation with 50 or more employees from having more directors who identify as male than members who don't identify as male while also requiring it to have at least one director who identifies as black, Indigenous or a person of colour or as being disabled by barriers and at least one director who's an employee of the corporation other than a senior manager.

New Laws

May 14: [Bill 25](#), *The Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act*, has been reported out of Committee. It requires a public sector entity that uses a public-private partnership to effect procurement for a major capital project to: i. conduct a preliminary analysis of the viability and expected risks, costs and benefits of using a public-private partnership for the project; ii. make information about the project and preliminary analysis publicly available and allow the public to comment; iii. comply with applicable procurement laws, agreements, policies and procedures; iv. engage an independent fairness monitor to oversee the procurement process and prepare a final report and contract summary; and v. report to the Auditor General and to the public at various stages of the project.

New Laws

May 22: Newly tabled [Bill 47](#), *The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act*, authorizes Manitoba to enter into reciprocal trade agreements with other provinces and territories that allow for a free flow of goods and services. The mutual recognition rules don't apply to goods and services provided by Crown corporations, regulated professions or specific sectors listed as exempt under the regulations.

New Laws

May 22: Manitoba created a new Innovation and Productivity Task Force to provide strategic advice on the safe and secure implementation of artificial intelligence and other new and emerging technologies to drive data-driven decision-making and economic growth.

New Laws

May 23: Manitoba is increasing wages for early childhood educators (ECE), thanks to federal funding. The increase of up to \$5.00 per hour depending on certification level and size of the child-care centre is the largest in Manitoba history and applies to all ECEs, retroactive to April 1.

Workplace Harassment

Apr 23: Legislation ([Bill 19](#)) has been reported out of Committee that requires all school boards to establish a policy on appropriate and inappropriate interactions between students and staff on and off school sites that includes procedures for reporting and addressing violations; and provide information about the policy to students, parents and the public. The school board must also ensure that school staff, coaches and volunteers complete sexual abuse prevention and school sport abuse prevention programs once every 4 years.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [Workplace Harassment Prevention and Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

Health & Safety

May 8: [Bill 29](#) proposing amendments to the *WSH Act* has been reported out of Committee. Highlights: i. Act's purposes expanded to include enabling workers to work in psychologically safe workplaces; ii. Employer may be ordered to implement a medical surveillance program if the Chief Occupational Medical Officer has reason to believe that a worker has been over-exposed to a harmful substance; iii. Workers who lose wages due to reprisal may collect them as unpaid wages under *The Employment Standards Code*; and iv. Clarification that required hazard assessments must be carried out by a competent person.

Action Point: Find out how to create a legally sound and effective [Psychological Safety Policy](#) for your own workplace.

Workers' Comp

May 1: The Manitoba WCB began distributing \$122 million worth of surplus funds rebates to employers via a credit equivalent to 50% of their 2024 premium. To qualify for the credit, employers must have fulfilled their 2024 payroll reporting responsibilities and owed a WCB premium. Employers who haven't yet reported 2024 payroll can still submit their information to receive the surplus distribution.

Workers' Comp

May 8: [Bill 24](#) amending *The Workers Compensation Act* to provide that if a worker who dies as a result of a workplace injury doesn't have a current or former spouse or common-law partner, the lump sum will instead be paid to the worker's estate or another person determined by the Manitoba WCB, has been reported out of Committee.

CASES

Termination: Rejecting Successor Company Job Offer Costs Exec \$750K+ in Damages

An electrical engineer and founder of Iders, a company acquired by GE signed a new employment contract with GE promising him a \$300,000 retention bonus if he was still running Iders as a full-time GE employee in 5 years. Less than 2 years later, GE entered into negotiations to sell Iders to Wabtec. As part of the acquisition, Wabtec offered employment on the same terms to all Iders' staff, including the engineer who declined the offer and decided to stay with GE to ensure his retention bonus. But GE let him go after the Wabtec deal closed. So, the engineer sued GE for nearly \$900,000 in damages. While ruling that GE committed constructive dismissal, the court also found that the engineer's rejection of the Wabtec offer was a failure to mitigate damages and awarded him only \$133,000. The engineer appealed but the Manitoba Court of Appeal held that it wasn't an error for the lower court to conclude that rejecting an offer of comparable employment from a successor employer was an unreasonable failure to mitigate. Unlike other cases involving similar situations that went in the employee's favour, accepting employment from Wabtec wouldn't have subjected the engineer to "hostility, embarrassment or humiliation" [[Brown v General Electric Canada](#), 2025 MBCA 37 (CanLII), April 25, 2025].

Action Point: Find out about the [7 things](#) wrongfully dismissed employees must do to "mitigate" their damages.