

New Brunswick

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Laws

May 14: [Bill 14](#) amending the *Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act* to make it easier for skilled workers and professionals who are registered or licensed in another province from to get their credentials recognized so they can ply their trade in New Brunswick passed Third Reading but hasn't yet received Royal Assent.

New Laws

May 12: New Brunswick began paying out its promised second \$5,000 retention payment to nurses. The first retention payment was distributed late last year to about 11,000 permanent full-time and part-time nurses as a first step to address the ongoing staffing shortage. The government is also negotiating with unions on additional \$5,000 retention payments.

Labour Relations

May 22: New Brunswick signed a new 4-year collective agreement with CUPE Local 1252, which represents over 9,600 regional health authorities workers providing a general wage increase of \$5 per hour over 4 years, retroactive to July 1, 2024. Employees will get hourly wage increases of \$1 in the first year, \$1.10 in the second year, \$1.30 in the third year, and \$1.60 in the fourth year.

Employment Benefits

May 21: [Bill 12](#) to repeal legislation adopted by the Progressive Conservatives in 2023 to force 5 unions into a shared-risk pension plan has gone to Committee. The CUPE filed a lawsuit challenging the 2023 legislation as a violation of Charter rights. Transition to transfer pensions hasn't started yet. So, once the PC legislation is repealed, the government and unions will have to resolve their outstanding pensions issues at the negotiating table.

Health & Safety

May 5: The pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak in New Brunswick is officially over. There were 1,029 cases reported during the 9-month outbreak, the most since the last provincial outbreak in 2012. Those most affected were children aged 10-14 years, followed by those 15-19 and 5-9. Nine cases required hospitalization, and no deaths were reported.

Action Point: Find out how to create a legally and clinically sound workplace [exposure control plan](#) to protect your employees against the risk of whooping cough, H5N1, COVID, or other infectious illnesses that may break out at your workplace.

Workers' Comp

May 13: [Bill 13](#), which is now through Third Reading, expands firefighters' benefits under the *Firefighters' Compensation Act* by changing the definition of "average earnings" on which injury benefits are based to "the daily, weekly, monthly or other regular remuneration" that a firefighter was getting at the time of disablement, loss of earnings, or death that the WorkSafeNB believes "best represents" those earnings unless it's proven that based on the firefighter's age and ongoing occupational, trade, technical, or professional training, those earnings would have probably increased.

Workers' Comp

May 1: WorkSafeNB revised [Policy 21-413](#) governing employers' return-to-work and re-employment responsibilities to injured workers to clarify that "suitable work" may be an existing position or one modified for the worker's restrictions. In either case, you must consider the worker's pre-accident employment, aptitudes, skills, work that's available, and any concerns for the safety of worker or coworkers.

Action Point: Find out about your workers' comp [duties to re-employ](#) injured workers and what you must do to comply with them.

CASES

Health & Safety: No Proof that Back Pain Is Recurrence of Work-Related Injury

Fifteen months after retiring, a postal clerk began experiencing what she claimed was a recurrence of the same work-related repetitive strain injury that forced her to miss months of work 4 years earlier. The New Brunswick workers' comp Commission denied her benefits claim. After losing the appeal, she took her case all the way to the province's highest court. But, alas, it was to no avail. The Commission made no error in ruling that the clerk didn't meet her burden of producing medical evidence to prove that her new back pain was a recurrence of the earlier work injury, concluded the high court [[Floyd v. Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission and Canada Post Corporation](#), 2025 NBCA 54 (CanLII), April 24, 2025].