

Northwest Territories

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Laws

Jun 12: The days of free rent on government-owned oil and gas development lands held under onshore Significant Discovery Licences (SDLs) are over. The GNWT began charging companies that hold SDLs rental fees of \$8.00 per hectare, due on March 31, 2026, with rates to increase each year. The new rental fees apply to all onshore SDLs issued since 2000 and all new SDLs issued going forward.

Health & Safety

Jun 6: The GNWT confirmed that 2 cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), also known as bird flu, have been detected in Yellowknife, one in a raven and the other in a ring-billed gull. There have been 9 confirmed cases of HPAI in birds in the Northwest Territories since 2022. While transmission of bird flu to humans is rare and relatively mild in nature, the NWT Chief Public Health Officer is advising residents to be cautious when handling birds.

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

Health & Safety

Jul 15: The WSCC's OHS Funding Program is now accepting applications from non-profit and for-profit services that offer services to help employers in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut improve workplace safety and comply with OHS laws. Applicants can request funding of \$5,000 to \$250,000 per project. Deadline [to apply](#): September 8.

Workplace Violence

May 28: [Bill 27](#) creating a new tort of "stalking," defined as conduct that causes a person to reasonably fear for their safety, including conduct carried out by electronic means, passed Second Reading. The Bill gives stalking victims the right to sue for money damages and seek protective orders.

Action Point: Find out how to protect your organization from [revenge porn and cyberbullying liability](#) risks.

Drugs & Alcohol

May 30: The GNWT published the results of its [2024 Survey](#) asking residents about their experiences with mental wellness and addictions recovery services and supports. A total of 659 respondents completed the survey, a roughly 50% increase over the previous 2021 Survey.

Action Point: Drug and alcohol addictions are recognized as disabilities that employers must accommodate but only to the point of undue hardship. Find out [how far employers must go to accommodate an employee's drug addiction.](#)

Workers' Comp

May 29: If and when it passes, [Bill 29](#) will add 3 new "listed diseases" that are presumed to be work-related under workers' comp for "firefighters," defined as workers engaged in fighting fires as a full-time, part-time or volunteer member of a fire department and who don't exclusively fight forest fires: i. any cancer type; ii. heart disease including disease of the pericardium or coronary arteries; and iii. heart injury including heart attack, cardiac arrest and arrhythmia.