

British Columbia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Labour Relations

Sep 19: That's the deadline [to comment](#) on the [report](#) of the Panel created to review BC's labour relations and trade union laws. One key takeaway is that the Panel did **not** recommend adding ride-hail, food delivery and other gig workers to the definition of "employees" with unionization rights. The current *Labour Relations* Code definition is broad enough to include those workers, the Panel concluded.

Action Point: Find out about current [employment law protections for gig workers](#).

Payroll

Sep 1: BC made what was initially planned to be the temporary tax credit on salaries and wages of workers employed by video game and virtual reality developers permanent. It also increased the credit from 17.5% to 25%. The video games and VR industry employs over 20,000 people in BC while contributing over \$1 billion to annual GDP.

New Laws

Jul 16: BC has received nearly 780 job applications from qualified health professionals across the U.S. since launching its recruitment campaign 2 months ago. New rules allow for US-trained doctors to become fully licensed in BC without need for further assessment, examination or training if they hold certification from the American Board of Medical Specialties, American Board of Family Medicine or the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians.

New Laws

Jul 25: The Governments of BC and Canada increased the compensation rate to producers under the AgriStability program from 80 to 90 cents for each dollar of decline in eligible income. The compensation cap for larger farms and ranches also doubled from \$3 million to \$6 million. AgriStability is a whole-farm, low-cost business risk-management program that helps farm operations manage large declines in net farming income via personalized coverage based on each farm's income tax and production.

Workplace Violence

Jul 9: BC issued a [new report](#) on the safety of community events in the province prepared by a government Commission in response to the April 26 Lapu-Lapu Filipino festival tragedy in South Vancouver during which a motor vehicle drove into the crowd and killed 11 people and injured many others.

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

Health & Safety

Jul 10: BC regional health authorities have reported a total of 102 measles cases so far in 2025, including one case that's still active and contagious. The majority of cases involve individuals who aren't fully vaccinated. The government advises adults born in 1970 or later to get 2 doses of a measles-containing vaccine, since one dose isn't enough to ensure full protection.

Action Point: Find out how to create a legally and clinically sound workplace [Exposure Control Plan](#) to protect your employees against the risk of measles, COVID, influenza, and other infectious illnesses.

Workers' Comp

Jul 14: Thanks to a \$570 million surplus, WorkSafeBC announced that it's planning to keep 2026 average workers' comp premium rates at \$1.55 per \$100 assessable payroll for the ninth year in a row. Actual industry base rates are expected to increase for 47% of employers, decrease for 39% and stay the same for the remaining 14%.

CASES

Labour Relations: Top Court Upholds Order Not to Use Out-of-Province Scabs

The BC Labour Relations Board ordered a food services company to stop using out-of-province replacement workers to perform catering work that would otherwise have been done by striking employees at the Vancouver International Airport. The company lost on appeal and the case went all the way to BC's top court. **Result:** The order stood. The Board and lower court had the legal authority to order the company to cease and desist from using out-of-province workers to perform "struck work" in response to a strike action by its employees at the airport, concluded the Court of Appeal [[Gate Gourmet Canada Inc. v. Unite Here, Local 40](#), 2025 BCCA 246 (CanLII), July 14, 2025].

Termination: Taking Away Senior Employee's Private Office & Desk Is Constructive Dismissal

A senior bookkeeper lover her work until the day she had a nasty confrontation with the company president. From then on, she claimed, the work atmosphere became toxic and her coworkers shunned her. Things came to a head when she was forced to share her office with a junior employee who also took over her desk. So, she left the firm and sued for constructive dismissal. The company denied the charge and claimed it unearthed evidence that the bookkeeper had manipulated her paycheque to get an unauthorized pay increase. After hearing from the bookkeeper and witnesses, the BC court ruled that the company didn't have just cause to terminate and committed constructive dismissal by marginalizing her bit by bit. re-Moving her from her desk in her own personal office to a desk along the wall of her office while a new employee got her old desk wasn't simply an exercise in "team building" but a visible act of humiliation. But while constituting constructive dismissal, it wasn't egregious enough to warrant punitive damages, the court concluded [[Soler v. Professional Components Ltd.](#), 2025 BCPC 120 (CanLII), July 2, 2025].

Action Point: While it might seem fairly minor, moving employees to smaller office may cross the line into constructive dismissal. Find out about the [13 most common constructive dismissal liability pitfalls](#) and what to do to manage each one.

Drugs & Alcohol: Minor Vehicle Accident Is Grounds for Post-Incident Drug Test

A worker driving a bomb-cart tractor-trailer to transport containers accidentally struck a parked rubber tire gantry. The company demanded that he submit to drug testing. The union claimed the incident wasn't a "significant event" justifying testing under the company's post-incident testing policy. The BC arbitrator disagreed. The fact that the incident was an unusual occurrence plus the \$2,500 in property damage it caused was reasonable evidence to conclude that it was a "significant event." The company also did a reasonable investigation before ordering the test [[British Columbia Maritime Employers' Association v International Longshore and Warehouse Union – Canada](#), 2025 CanLII 72308 (BC LA), June 9, 2025].

Action Point: Find out [how to create a legally sound drug testing policy](#) at your workplace and get a template policy you can adapt for your own situation.

Health & Safety: BC Hands Out Canada's Highest OHS Fine of Year—Again

For the third time this year, WorkSafeBC dished out a \$783,068 OHS fine, which is the highest OHS penalty reported in Canada in 2025. On the receiving end this time was a Kamloops long-term care facility targeted for inspection in response to reports of disturbances of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) during telecommunications installation work involving drilling into drywall near areas used by staff. Inspectors cited the employer for a series of high-risk OHS asbestos violations, including failure to implement exposure control program before undertaking work involving the risk of disturbing ACMs [[Interior Health Authority](#)].

Action Point: Don't let this happen to you!! Find out [how to create a vibrant safety culture](#) at your company to prevent injuries and massive OHS fines.