

# New Brunswick

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Labour Relations

Jul 18: New Brunswick signed a new collective agreement with CUPE Local 1253 representing school bus drivers, maintenance workers, custodians and other school district workers that provides a general wage increase of \$5 per hour over 4 years, retroactive to April 1, 2024, including \$1 in the first year, \$1.10 in the second, \$1.30 in the third, and \$1.60 in the fourth year. The deal also includes a new recruitment and retention premium, an adjustment to weekend and split-shift premiums and an increase to on-call premiums for weekends and holidays.

### Drugs & Alcohol

Jul 7: New Brunswick signed a Memorandum of Understanding to allow direct-to-consumer alcoholic beverage sales to and from other Canadian jurisdictions who've adopted equivalent free trade rules.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement an effective [fitness for duty policy to control substance abuse](#) at your workplace.

### Health & Safety

Jun 30: WorkSafeNB released its [2024 Annual Report](#). Takeaways: The lost-time injuries rate remained at a 5-year low of 1.0 per 100 workers. Healthcare had the most injury claims at 25%, followed by public administration at 20% and manufacturing at 14%. The occupations with the most injury claims were nurses (15%), teachers and labourers (11% each), and truck drivers (6%). Traumatic psychological injury claims accepted increased from 227 to 255. There were 14 fatality claims, 1 fewer than in 2023.

**Action Point:** Find out [how to create a vibrant safety culture](#) at your company to prevent work injuries and costly workers' comp claims.

### Workplace Violence

Jul 28: New Brunswick said it plans to invest \$9.2 million in gender-based violence services, including \$4.6 million for the transition house program providing emergency shelter to women fleeing violence, \$1.5 million for the second-stage housing program and \$2.1 million for the gender-based violence outreach program offering prevention, education and support services to victims of violence.

**Action Point:** Find out [how to protect your employees](#) from the risk of workplace domestic violence.

### Workers' Comp

Jul 1: Effective today, WorkSafeNB will pay new surviving spouses, that is, spouses of a worker who dies on or after July 1, 2025, 90% of the deceased worker's net earnings, with no family income test. The surviving spouse must use an amount equal to 10% of benefits paid, combined with accrued interest based on the rate of return, whether positive or negative, to purchase an annuity at age 65.

## **Workers' Comp**

Aug 21: That's the deadline [to comment](#) on [proposed updates](#) to WorkSafeNB Policy 21-112 Occupational Hearing Loss clarifying the rules for workers' comp coverage for noise-induced and traumatic hearing loss and tinnitus. We welcome input from workers, employers, and stakeholders during this 30-day consultation.

## **CASES**

### **Labour Relations: Years of Union Silence Is Not Consent to Unauthorized Deductions**

The employer admitted to making deductions of \$5.00 from the pay of unionized employees not authorized by the collective agreement since 2009 but blamed it on an "honest mistake" while claiming that the union knew about the deduction for years. Having kept silent for so long, the union was "estopped" from demanding a refund now, it argued. But the New Brunswick labour arbitrator was unmoved finding that the union's silence was the product not of acceptance but ignorance. The union didn't nor should it have been expected to know about the unauthorized deduction until 2023, after which it immediately demanded repayment. Result: The company had to stop making the deduction and provide affected employees a full refund plus 7% interest [[CUPE, Local 886 v. Regional Municipality of Grand Falls](#), 2025 CanLII 62920 (NB LA), July 6, 2025].