

# Nova Scotia

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Minimum Wage

Oct 1: Nova Scotia will raise its minimum wage for the second time this year. After the 50-cent increase in April, the general minimum will rise from \$15.70 to \$16.50. The minimum wage for non-time workers in the logging and forestry sector will also increase from \$3,086.60 to \$3,243.90 per month on that date.

**Action Point:** Find out [how to avoid common payroll errors](#) when adjusting to minimum wage increases.

### Workplace Harassment

Sep 1: That's the deadline for Nova Scotia employers to implement a written [workplace harassment prevention policy](#) that includes expectations for a harassment-free workplace, reporting, and investigation mechanisms and non-retaliation assurances. Employers must train workers on the policy and review it at least every 3 years.

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

### New Laws

Jul 29: The federal and provincial governments designated the nation's first 4 offshore wind energy areas on Nova Scotia's offshore in the areas of French Bank, Middle Bank, Sable Island Bank, and Sydney Bight. The next step in developing offshore wind energy will be to identify the parcels within the designated areas that will be included in the first call for bids later this year. The aim is to license 5 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030.

### New Laws

Aug 19: Nova Scotia issued a request for supplier qualification targeting qualified consultants to carry out a feasibility study of constructing a light rail system in Halifax Regional Municipality and passenger rail system in the broader region. Deadline [to respond](#): September 16.

### Workers' Comp

Jul 31: The Nova Scotia WCB is keeping the average employer assessment rate at \$2.65 per \$100 in 2026. The system has reached 106.7% funding as of year-end 2024, thanks to solid investments and declining claims rates. As of June 2025, the reported injury rate dropped to 1.31 time-loss injuries per 100 covered workers. Over three quarters of workers are returning to work within 90 days, the best outcome in many years.

### Workers' Comp

Aug 13: The Nova Scotia WCB launched an initiative to help injured workers return to

work sooner. The new Work-Connected Recovery Program will seek to improve what the WCB acknowledged to be “some of Canada’s worst statistics in time loss from work” by knitting together the current patchwork of more than 500 providers within the workers’ compensation system into a more efficient province-wide network of providers. Under the new system, workers will also receive up to 12 months of follow-up—more than twice the industry standard—to support recovery and reduce injury.

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

## CASES

### **Labour Relations: No Duty to Return Temporarily Reassigned Employees to their Original Unit**

For years, an assisted living facility made every effort to return the union workers it temporarily reassigned to cover for employees on leave or vacation to their original unit after the reassignment. But it stopped following that policy when COVID struck and so many employees had to be placed on unpaid leave. The union claimed the new practice violated the collective agreement, but the Nova Scotia arbitrator disagreed. The operative language was a clause in the collective agreement stating that “leave of absence without pay, subject to the requirements of the employer, may be arranged by mutual consent between the parties for union business, medical attention or other good reason” and that “[w]hen an employee returns to work after being on leave of absence, he or she shall have the right to return to his or her original position.” The right to return to the original unit applied to unpaid leaves of absence “arranged by mutual consent.” But COVID leave wasn’t such an arrangement. So, the clause didn’t apply and the grievance failed [[Unifor Local 4606 v Northwood Halifax](#), 2025 CanLII 79117 (NS LA), August 7, 2025].