

# Nova Scotia

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Minimum Wage

Oct 1: Nova Scotia increased minimum wages for the second time this year, this time by 80 cents 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. Going forward, the province will implement annual increases based on the Consumer Price Index.

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

### Payroll

Sep 23: Under, newly tabled and soon to be enacted Nova Scotia legislation ([Bill 127](#)), unauthorized collection, use and disclosure of a person's Social Insurance Number may result in fines of up to \$50,000 for an individual and \$500,000. Employers will still be allowed to collect, use, and disclose SINs for payroll and other legitimate HR functions.

**Action Point:** [Collecting Social Insurance Numbers from new employees](#) can be a tricky process fraught with hidden legal risks. Find out how to do it effectively at your workplace.

### New Laws

Sep 25: [Bill 137](#), the *Making Business Easier Act*, which is already through Second Reading, gives the government broad authority to adopt new regulations to streamline and simplify the province's apprenticeship and trades qualifications rules and processes.

### New Laws

Sep 20: The federal and provincial governments moved forward with their ambitious offshore wind project plan by issuing the new Canada–Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator “Strategic Direction” to develop a prequalification process that developers can use to bid for projects in the newly designated Wind Energy Areas. Such projects may include interties between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, transmission cables between Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, and further development of Churchill Falls and Gull Island.

### New Laws

Sep 2: After detecting the aquatic animal diseases MSX and Dermo in local oyster samples, the federal government declared the waters of eastern Canada including Nova Scotia as areas subject to the Domestic Movement Control Program permitting rules. **Result:** Oysters that have been grown to commercial size and processed for human consumption may still be exported and sold but oysters not ready for the commercial market and still growing may not be moved outside the declared areas.

## Training

Sep 22: Nova Scotia established an advisory committee to create a new provincial firefighter training program that covers everything from how fire behaves to safe use of ladders to get people out of crashed vehicles. The government created the committee after a value-for-money audit found serious safety and governance issues at the Nova Scotia Firefighters Training School earlier this summer.

## New Laws

Aug 27: It's literally a gold mine! After 7 years of consultation and review, Nova Scotia officially approved a new gold mine in Guysborough County that's expected to create 735 new jobs and contribute \$2.1 billion to the province's GDP. Work on the Goldboro gold mine, which is owned by NexGold Mining Corp., is expected to start in 2026.

## Discrimination

Oct 10: October 10<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to complete an [online survey](#) about the Nova Scotia's Human Rights Commission's current administration, complaints and enforcement systems and what can be done to improve them.

## Privacy

Sep 26: The Nova Scotia Assembly tabled and will soon pass [Bill 150](#), a reinvented and modernized version of its 25-year-old *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act*. Among other things, the legislation extends oversight of privacy to municipalities and villages, requires public bodies to notify individuals of affected by privacy breaches carrying a significant risk of harm and increases fines for privacy violations. Effective date: April 1, 2027.

**Action Point:** Find out about the 12 things you should do to [prevent employee data breaches](#) at your workplace.

## Workers' Comp

Sep 1: Nova Scotia employers can now access their 2026 assessment rate and full experience rating statement using the *Forms & Letters* tab on [MyAccount](#). The WCB confirmed last month that it's keeping the average employer assessment rate at \$2.65 per \$100. But the big news is that the Assembly is about to pass legislation ([Bill 144](#)) that will implement the province's first rate cut in 30 years in 2027.

## Workers' Comp

Sep 26: In addition to a 2027 rates cut, [Bill 144](#) will: i. increase the cost-of-living adjustment for benefits from 50% to 100% of the consumer price index, up to 3% annually; ii. expand presumptive cancer coverage to wildland firefighters and fire investigators; iii. expand survivor benefits; iv. require employers to report a workplace injury within 2 days rather than 5; and v. allow employers to access reports on the functional abilities of injured workers to support their return to work.

## CASES

### Health & Safety: Employers Can't Appeal an OHS Inspector's Warning

An OHS officer responding to reports of flying rock debris from a worksite issued a warning advising the construction contractor to “take adequate precautions to ensure the safety of the pedestrian or other person near the workplace.” The contractor claimed that it wasn’t responsible for the rocks in question and appealed the warning to the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board. But the Board refused to take the case. While the *OHS Act* gives employers the right to appeal an OHS “order,” a warning isn’t an order. A warning is just a suggestion and not a command to take an action the way an “order” is, the Board reasoned. And the Act doesn’t expressly say that warnings are appealable [[ARCP – Atlantic Road Construction and Paving Limited \(Re\)](#)]. 2025 NSLB 291 (CanLII), July 28, 2025].