

New Brunswick

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Labour Relations

Oct 23: The government's newly signed collective agreement with the New Brunswick Nurses Union, representing more than 9,000 nurses, provides for a general wage increase of 12.5% over 4 years, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2024, as well as retroactive increases in extra pay for weekend, evening and night shifts. The sides also agreed to establish a working group to review issues related to nurse staffing and nurse-to-patient ratios and working conditions.

Employment Benefits

Oct 22: The New Brunswick Financial and Consumer Services Commission issued [revised Guidance](#) establishing new requirements for the statutory discharge of annuity buy-outs. From now on pensions administrators must send a notice to the individuals for whom the purchase is made listing: i. a statement that the administrator has purchased a deferred pension, or pension, as applicable, for the individual from an insurance company; ii. a statement that the deferred pension, or pension is the same as what would have been provided under the pension plan had the purchase not been made; iii. the date of the purchase; iv. the insurance company's group policy number and the certificate number issued by the insurance company that confirms the purchase; v. the name and contact information of the insurance company; and vi. a statement that if the administrator is discharged under Section 33 of the *Pension Benefits Act*, the individual has no further rights or entitlement to any payment from the pension plan, except in certain circumstances where the pension plan is wound up and has a surplus. The Guidance also clarifies the tests that a plan must meet for such purchases.

Drugs & Alcohol

Oct 10: *Motor Vehicle Act* amendments that took effect in January allow peace officers to immediately suspend the license of a driver who fails a roadside screening test as an alternative to laying criminal charges. But New Brunswick has now revised its procedures for immediate roadside license suspensions in response to a Sept. 22 court decision finding the current process unfair.

Action Point: Employers should have an [off-duty conduct policy](#) that lays the legal groundwork for discipline in the event of drunk driving and other transgressions that impact the company and employee's ability to do the job.

Workers' Comp

Oct 2: WorkSafeNB announced that it's keeping the 2026 average assessment rate at \$1.10 per \$100 of payroll, the second lowest in Canada. More good news: WorkSafeNB will also issue \$53.2 million in performance refunds to eligible employers, with refunds over \$1,000 to be issued by cheque and refunds under \$1,000 as a credit to the employer's account.