

Québec

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Payroll

Jan 1: QPP rates and benefits increased 2.0% for inflation. Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings rose from \$71,300 to \$74,600 and Yearly Additional Maximum Pensionable Earnings increased to \$81,200. The basic exemption remained at \$3,500. The QPP contribution rate for the Base Plan decreased 0.2% to 10.6%. The contribution rate for the Additional Plan is 2.00%.

Payroll

Jan 1: QPIP premiums decreased in 2026 to 0.430% for wage earners (vs. 0.494% in 2025), 0.602% for employers (vs. 0.692% in 2025), and 0.764% for the self-employed (vs. 0.878% in 2025). Maximum Insurable Earnings increased from \$98,000 to \$103,000.

Payroll

Jan 1: The EI premium rate for Québec employers in 2026 fell 1 cent to \$1.30 per \$100. Maximum insurable earnings increased from \$65,700 to \$68,900. The maximum employee premium increased from \$1,204.94 to \$1,253.98, while the maximum employer EI premium climbed from \$860.67 to \$895.70.

Employment Benefits

Jan 1: [Bill 80](#) amendments to the *Supplemental Pension Plans Act* and *Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans Act* regulating pensions paid into a variable payment life pension fund and the benefits payable in the event of the death of the beneficiary of such a pension officially took effect. Retraite Québec will hold a webinar for plan administrators (in French) on implementation and administration of variable payment life pensions this March.

Labour Relations

Dec 11: It's on to Committee for construction union governance legislation [Bill 3](#) requiring that: i. union dues deducted in advance by employers include principal and optional dues; ii. establishment or modification of principal dues amounts be authorized by secret ballot by a majority of voting members; iii. votes over union dues, strikes and signing of collective agreements be held over at least 24-hour period; and iv. only optional dues be used to finance certain determined activities, where those activities are financed by union dues.

Immigration

Nov 6: Québec reduced its immigration targets for the next 4 years. The newly announced 2026-2029 Immigration Plan calls for admitting 45,000 permanent residents per year. The Plan also seeks to limit the maximum number of Temporary Foreign Worker Program permit holders to 65,000 and International Student Program permit holders to 110,000 by 2029.

Immigration

Dec 17: Québec extended the suspension of new applications for collective sponsorship of refugees abroad until December 31, 2029, and the suspension of Labour Market Impact Assessment applications for Montreal and Laval under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program until December 31, 2026. A new French language proficiency requirement for temporary foreign workers renewing their applications after 3 years also took effect.

Action Point: Find out what companies and their HR directors need to know to [navigate the immigration law maze](#).

Training

Dec 15: [Mandatory training](#) for Class 1 driver's licences took effect in Québec. To obtain a new Class 1 license, applicants must either complete the new Road Safety Education Program (PSEP - class 1) offered by an SAAQ-recognized training provider or get a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DEP) in truck transportation from the Québec Ministry of Education. Drivers who already hold a valid Class 1 licence don't have to take the mandatory training.

Payroll

Nov 27: According to a government report, the Québec public service will have a lower average 2025 salary (-12.1%) for comparable jobs than that of organizations with 200 or more employees. As compared to comparable jobs in the Québec private sector and other public sectors, salaries in the public service will be 8.6% and 17.9% lower, respectively.

Telecommuting

Dec 3: Québec public sector employees who've been working remotely must return to the office for at least 3 days per week by the end of January. The government also announced plans to cut 5,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions by the end of the 2027 fiscal year. The current recruitment and hiring freeze will remain in effect, with the exception of Santé Québec, government networks and businesses.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [legally sound telecommuting policy](#) at your workplace.

Health & Safety

Nov 17: CNESST advised employers to take safety measures to protect outdoor workers against winter conditions. Recommendations: Provide temporary heated and ventilated shelters, vent combustion products released by heating equipment directly to the outside and monitor carbon monoxide concentration, cover handles and metal bars with thermal insulation, alternate periods of work and warm-up, and ensure that workers wear clothing appropriate for the temperature and tasks performed.

CASES

Probationary Employment: Failure to Provide Training Makes Probationary Employee's Termination Abusive

A building company fired a technical advisor during his probationary period for lack of competence. The union cried foul, contending that the company didn't provide the advisor the training and support he needed to do the job. The company countered that it couldn't afford and wasn't obligated to deliver the months of training the advisor obviously needed, especially since his CV suggested that he'd be ready to do the job from day one. The Québec arbitrator upheld the grievance and ordered reinstatement. It was "abusive" to terminate what was supposed to be a 6-month probationary period after barely 7 weeks when the evidence suggested that he had no integration problems, got along well with colleagues, was punctual and expressed his need for training and progress reports. The only thing he lacked, the arbitrator concluded, was "adequate support" [[Quebec Federation of Cooperative Housing v. Union of Cooperative Housing Employees \(FISA\)](#), 2025 CanLII 130823 (QC SAT), December 16, 2025].

Action Point: The moral of this case is that firing probationary employees isn't necessarily as easy as you may think. To [avoid mistakes](#) that can lead to wrongful dismissal liability, you need a clear [Probationary Employment Policy](#) and [Contract Language](#).

Drugs & Alcohol: OK to Fire Drug Addict for Violating Last-Chance Agreement

A mining operator terminated a safety-sensitive worker with a history of marijuana use for violating his last-chance agreement after he failed 2 more drug tests. The union claimed that the worker's marijuana use was an addiction entitling him to reasonable accommodations. The Québec arbitrator agreed with both points but found that the company did make reasonable accommodations by entering into the last-chance agreement allowing the worker to keep his job despite all his previous marijuana offences. In return, the worker agreed to certain conditions, including remaining sober. Once the worker violated that condition, it was reasonable for the company to conclude that further accommodation would be futile and that keeping him in his safety-sensitive position would impose undue hardship, especially since the worker was less than forthright about and unwilling to acknowledge the dangers associated with his marijuana use [[ArcelorMittal v. United Steelworkers, Local 6869](#), 2025 CanLII 126713 (QC SAT), November 26, 2025].

Action Point: Drug and alcohol addictions are recognized as disabilities that employers must accommodate but only to the point of undue hardship. Find out [how far employers must go to accommodate an employee's drug or alcohol addiction](#).

Social Media: Using a Cellphone While Operating Heavy Equipment Is Grounds for Suspension

A warehouse suspended a worker for one day without pay for using his cellphone while operating a pallet jack in violation of company OHS policies. The union contended that the penalty was unduly harsh given the worker's clean disciplinary record and the fact that the pallet jack was in a stationary position when the violation occurred. But the Québec arbitrator ruled that the penalty was fair and reasonable, noting that the distribution center was a safety-sensitive workplace and that talking on a cellphone while on a pallet jack posed a significant risk of serious or

fatal injury, even if the rolling equipment was stationary at the time [[United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 501 c Metro Richelieu Inc., Grocery Division](#), 2025 CanLII 115322 (QC SAT), November 11, 2025].

Action Point: Cellphones, headsets and other personal devices that workers use on the job may cause distractions that lead to accidents and injuries. One way to solve the problem is to implement an [effective Cellphone/Mobile Device Workplace Use Policy](#).