

Alberta

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Employment Standards

Jan 2: Alberta published [updated](#) employment standards guidance setting out basic information about employees' rights with respect to pay, time off, breaks, and other issues.

Action Point: Look up the [maximum work hours and rest requirements](#) in each part of Canada.

Employment Benefits

Feb 9: The Alberta Superintendent published the [updated List of Financial Institutions](#) offering locked-in pension products to customers. LIRAs, LIFs, and LRIFs must be on the Superintendent's List of Financial Institutions offering locked-in pension products to accept transfers of locked-in funds.

Privacy

From Feb. 2 to May 1, Alberta will be holding [public consultations](#) on the *Personal Information Protection Act*, which establishes limits on how private organizations collect, use, disclose, and protect personal information. PIPA, which took effect in 2004, hasn't been substantially updated since 2010, despite significant changes in technology, data use, and public expectations around privacy.

Workplace Violence

March 16 is the deadline [to apply](#) for new Alberta Gender-Related Injury and Illness Prevention Program (GRIIPP) grants for research projects on gender-based factors that cause women to experience higher rates of workplace injury and illness, such as ill-fitting PPE. Roughly \$1.8 million in GRIIP funding will be available from 2026 to 2028.

Action Point: Gender-based, sexual, and domestic violence becomes an OHS issue and liability risk for employers when it happens at the victim's workplace. Find out [how to protect your employees](#) from the risk of workplace domestic violence.

Health & Safety

Jan 15: The Alberta WCB accepted 43,400 workers' compensation claims involving injuries to the hand and wrist from 2019 to 2023, averaging nearly 8,700 claims per year, and 17 lost workdays per claim at an average per claim cost of \$7,717. Food/convenience stores and restaurant/hotels generated the most claims with 6% each, followed by health services with 5%.

Action Point: Find out [how to create a vibrant workplace health and safety culture](#) at your company.

Health & Safety

Jan 15: Alberta issued new FAQs [guidance](#) to help employers comply with their OHS duties to report potentially serious incidents to the government. PSIs, the guidance

explains, are incidents that had a likelihood of causing serious injury or illness with reporting required when there's reasonable cause to believe that corrective actions may be necessary to prevent recurrence.

CASES

Workplace Harassment: Use of “N” Word Is Just Cause to Terminate Without Progressive Discipline

The union claimed it was excessive to fire a worker with 17 years of service and no disciplinary record for using the “n” word to refer to two Black coworkers and later referring to another as a “monkey” without any progressive discipline. The union also claimed that workers commonly used vulgarity and racial slurs on the job. But the Alberta arbitrator didn't buy it saying there was no evidence that anybody else in the workplace using the “n” word or “monkeys,” let alone that such usage was considered acceptable [[Building Products of Canada Corp. v Unifor Union of Canada, Local 777](#), 2026 CanLII 2711 (AB GAA), January 5, 2026].

Action Point: While progressive discipline is generally the preferred approach, the takeaway from this case is that some employee transgressions may be grounds for termination even for a first offence. Use of the “N” word and other slurs may rise to that level, depending on the circumstances involved. The lesson for employers is that it's imperative to implement a legally sound and effective [Workplace Harassment Prevention and Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent this form of conduct and lay the groundwork for discipline in case of violations.

Labour Relations: Union Gets Last Laugh in “Final Offer” Wage Dispute

Having reached an impasse, the union representing workers of a national food retailer and the company entered a “final offer selection process” in which an arbitrator would choose between the sides' final wage offers. The arbitrator opted for the union, concluding that it best replicated what the parties would have achieved through free collective bargaining. The company turned the tables when the court quashed the arbitrator's ruling, setting up a final showdown in the province's top court. **Result:** The Alberta Court of Appeal reinstated the arbitrator's decision, finding that it was reasonable and that the court shouldn't have overturned it [[Sobeys Capital Incorporated v United Food and Commercial Workers, Local No 401](#), 2026 ABCA 39 (CanLII), February 12, 2026].