

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

April 1 is when Nova Scotia's general minimum wage will increase from \$16.50 to \$16.75 per hour. Another 25 cents increase will take the minimum wage to \$17 per hour on October 1. The scheduled increases come a year after the province raised its minimum wage by \$1.30 per hour in 2025.

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

Minimum Wage

Apr 1: The minimum wage for Logging and Forest Operations time workers will increase from \$16.50 to \$16.75 per hour and for other workers from \$3,243.90 to \$3,293.05 per month. On October 1, the rates will increase again to \$17.00 per hour and \$3,342.20 per month, respectively.

New Laws

Jan 22: Nova Scotia is cracking down on illegal fisheries activities using new *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act* summary offences carrying higher fines, including buying or processing illegally caught fish (\$25,000 for first offence and \$50,000 for subsequent offences). Last November, the province launched a new compliance unit of inspectors focusing on wharves and seafood facilities.

New Laws

Jan 30: The Nova Scotia Department of Energy is urging the Energy Board to reject Nova Scotia Power's proposed 2026–2027 residential rate increase, which it claims is “tone-deaf” to ongoing cost pressures faced by the province's households, businesses, and municipalities. “Nova Scotians are already stretched, and electricity is not optional,” it argues.

New Laws

Jan 27: Nova Scotia [reports](#) that it's made improvements to nearly 300 permits as part of its Fewer Permits. Faster project launched in early 2025 to simplify permitting and cut red tape. Key improvements include elimination of permits for low-risk activities, lengthening of time frames for renewal, and streamlining of application processes and restructuring fees.

Training

Feb 10: The Province and Nova Scotia Community College are launching an institution to provide students and apprentices training in the skilled trades. To be guided by an industry-led council, the new Institute of Skilled Trades (IST) will be supported by a five-year, \$25-million investment for new innovative equipment and tools to enhance classrooms, training, and workshops across the province.

Training

Jan 21: Nova Scotia's new Skills Bridge initiative will provide support to Canadian Armed Forces veterans, reservists and family members seeking to transition to construction careers with training to be provided by the non-profit organization Helmets to Hardhats. The program runs until October 1, 2028.

Health & Safety

Feb 17: Even though injury rates are at an all-time of 1.21 per 100 covered workers, the WCB reported that there were 22 work fatalities in Nova Scotia in 2025, two more than in 2024. Deaths related to occupational diseases more than doubled from six to 13, including four due to cancers that are now presumed to be work-related under workers' comp when suffered by firefighters. Deaths due to heart attack, stroke, and other health-related events occurring at work fell from seven to two, while acute traumatic incident deaths remained at seven.

Action Point: Find out [how to avoid injuries and workers' compensation claims by creating a vibrant workplace health and safety culture](#) at your company.

Workers' Compensation

March 31 is the deadline for Nova Scotia employers to submit their workers' compensation payroll reports to the WCB listing their actual numbers from 2025 and projected numbers for 2026 to avoid potential late fees, interest and penalties.

Action Point: Look up the [2026 workers' compensation premium rates](#) in each part of Canada.

Workers' Compensation

Feb 12: Last fall, Nova Scotia passed legislation amending the *Workers' Compensation Act* to allow the WCB to review an extended earnings-replacement benefit (EERB) at any time instead of only at fixed intervals of 36 and 60 months. Now the WCB is holding public consultations on a [proposed policy](#) for implementing its new EERB review powers. Deadline to comment: March 16.

CASES

Corporate Leadership: CEO Who Misused Hospital Resources for Personal Gain Must Do Jail Time

"May this sentence serve as a message to public officials that public service is a high calling, and fraud against public institutions should result in the doors of a jail cell locking behind an offender." So, concluded a Nova Scotia court in finding that a 65-year-old former CEO of IWK Children's Hospital convicted of fraud for using corporate credit cards, flight passes, taxi and limousine services, and other IWK resources for personal uses should spend time in jail. In ruling that a Conditional Sentencing Order requiring extended probation and community service, but no jail, wouldn't be adequate, the court reasoned that misappropriating over \$30,000 from a publicly funded hospital is a serious crime, especially when it's committed by its highest-level executive entrusted with protecting the institution. The fact that the CEO didn't think she did anything wrong did little to help her case. "I find the offence

was deliberate, demonstrated corporate arrogance, and a high expectation that she would not be held accountable,” the court explained in sentencing the CEO to nine months in prison [[R v Kitch](#), 2026 NSPC 6 (CanLII), February 4, 2026].

Action Point: The *Kitch* case received widespread media attention. The judge was certainly aware of this in sending the message that high level executives who abuse their trusted positions for personal gain risk doing hard time in prison.