

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Apr 1: Nova Scotia's first minimum wage increase of 2026 takes effect. After going from \$16.50 to \$16.75 per hour, the general minimum wage will go up another 25 cents to \$17.00 per hour on October 1. These 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 increases 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 increase again to \$17.00 per hour and \$3,342.20 per month, respectively.

Action Point: Find out about the latest round of [minimum wage increases](#) taking effect across Canada.

New Laws

Mar 16: The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) announced a historic 10-year, \$200 million federal investment to lease a multi-user spaceport near Canso, Nova Scotia. A spaceport is a launch site for rockets carrying satellites into orbit. Once operational, the Canso facility will allow satellites to be launched directly from Canadian soil. The spaceport will be operated by Maritime Launch Services to serve the needs of the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces.

New Laws

Feb 19: The Government of Canada is investing over \$4 million of Regional Defence Investment Initiative (RDII) funding, most of it repayable, to nine businesses in Nova Scotia (in order of amount): Sensor Technology Ltd., Mathers Logistics Ltd., Salient Energy Inc., AML Oceanographic Ltd., GALAXIA Mission Systems, Marine Thinking Inc., Atlantic Hardchrome Limited, L & M Highland Outfitters Limited, and Leeway Marine.

New Laws

Mar 2: [Bill 193](#), the *Powering the Economy Act*, creating new laws and systems to tax, finance, and regulate offshore wind, geothermal, natural hydrogen, helium, and carbon storage projects in Nova Scotia, is already through Second Reading on its way to almost certain passage.

Training

Mar 10: The Assembly is two steps away from passing amendments to the *Community Colleges Act* ([Bill 196](#)) would establish a new Institute of Skilled Trades

(IST) at Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), to be led by an industry-led council and funded by a five-year, \$25-million investment for new innovative equipment and tools to enhance classrooms, training, and workshops across the province.

Employment Benefits

Feb 17: New [Pension Benefits Regulations](#) ban individual Schedule 4A Life Income Funds (LIF) holders from transferring their locked-in funds to a Locked-In Retirement Account (LIRA). The rule is designed to prevent “churning”—unlocking more than 50% of locked-in funds by transferring from a LIF to a LIRA and then back to a LIF, unlocking 50% each time.

Health & Safety

Feb 24: WCB Nova Scotia reports that snow and ice-related work injuries are running roughly 40% above last winter's pace. Through January 30, WCB received 278 claims for such injuries, as opposed to 197 in the winter of 2024-2025, and 217 the winter before. Snow and ice-related injuries usually spike one to three days after major winter weather events, especially slips, trips, and falls on outdoor surfaces.

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

Leaves of Absence

Mar 3: In the unlikely event that it's enacted, newly tabled [Private Member Bill 219](#) would create a new paid leave of absence for employees who have experienced gender-based violence. Employees would need at least three months of employment with their employer to qualify for paid leave. Such legislation generally requires a government bill to secure passage.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Domestic Violence Leave Compliance Game Plan](#) along with a [Leave Policy template](#) that you can tailor to meet Nova Scotia rules.

Workplace Harassment

Mar 3: The Nova Scotia Assembly tabled but will unlikely pass [Private Member Bill 217](#) imposing new restrictions on the use of non-disclosure agreements to resolve harassment, violence, discrimination, and coercion claims in workplaces and other settings where power imbalances may exist.

Drugs & Alcohol

Mar 10: Newly tabled [Bill 200](#) amends the *Cannabis Control Act* to improve public safety passed Second Reading. Highlights: Higher fines for violations, new offence for landlords that allow their property to be used for illegal cannabis sale or distribution, use of peace officers to enforce the law in addition to the police, and loosening of courtroom evidence rules making it easier to prove presence of cannabis.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [fitness for duty policy to control substance abuse](#) at your workplace.

Drugs & Alcohol

Mar 2: Nova Scotia signed a direct-to-consumer agreement with Ontario that will allow Nova Scotia producers to sell their wine, beer and spirits directly to Ontarians

and Nova Scotians to order alcoholic beverages directly from Ontario producers. Of course, consumers must be 19 or older to order alcohol, and the beverages must be for personal use.

Workers' Compensation

Apr 1: For the first time since 1999, the Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration carried out a full review of Nova Scotia's Workers' Compensation Appeals System. The Department will now review the feedback and propose improvements to the System.

CASES

Labour Relations: Public Sector Wage Freeze Law Violates Workers' Charter Rights

A Nova Scotia court ruled that government Bill 148 enacted in 2015 to freeze the wages and alter the provisions of collective agreements with public sector employees was unconstitutional because it violated workers' Charter rights to free and fair collective bargaining. The ruling addresses a long-running dispute between the provincial government and several unions, including the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). The court ordered the government to reach a new agreement with the affected unions within one year, that is, by February 25, 2027 [[CUPE v. Nova Scotia \(Attorney General\)](#), 2026 NSSC 57 (CanLII), February 25, 2026].