



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

On May 1, Québec will raise its general minimum wage 50 cents to \$16.60 per hour. The minimum wage for workers earning tips will increase 40 cents to \$13.30. The raspberry pickers minimum wage will increase 15 cents to \$4.93 per kilogram and the rate for strawberry pickers will increase four cents to \$1.32 per kilogram.

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

Telecommuting

Feb 17: With the prevalence of telework, Revenu Québec is going to allow businesses to claim the refundable job training tax credit for a student or apprentice that serves the required on-the-job training period hours even if they do so from a remote location without being physically present in the company's Québec establishment.

Action Point: Find out about the [8 important new payroll changes](#) that will affect your current year T4 filings and 2026 source deductions.

Work Hours

Mar 11: Québec launched a one-year pilot project allowing (but not requiring) non-food retail stores, shops, points of sale, and markets in the province to open their doors to the public from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Monday to Sunday, excluding holidays. Québec is one of the few places in North America to legislate opening hours. The pilot project gives businesses greater flexibility to adapt to the needs of their clientele.

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

Labour Relations

Feb 26: The Québec Assembly resumed debate on [Bill 3](#) imposing new rules on construction union governance, including the requirement that: i. union dues deducted in advance by employers include principal dues and optional dues; ii. establishment or modification of the amount of the principal dues 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 a period of at least 24 hours; and iv. only optional dues be used to finance certain determined activities, where those activities are financed by union dues.

New Laws

Mar 13: Québec reported that thanks to hiring freezes, early retirements, overtime restrictions, and other measures, it eliminated 3,106 full time equivalent (FTE) public service positions in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, exceeding its target of 2,000 FTE reductions. As a result, the province is well on its way to reaching its staff reduction target of 4,000 FTEs by March 31, 2027.

New Laws

Feb 19: Debate continues on [Bill 15](#) proposing to amend the *Professional Code* by streamlining the regulatory processes of the professional system and broaden certain professional practices in the field of health and social services.

Action Point: Find out about the [5 ways the new interprovincial free trade and labour mobility regulations impact HR operations](#).

Immigration

Mar 13: The federal government announced a new temporary immigration measure that will allow eligible workers in Québec to get an employer-specific work permit under the International Mobility Program enabling them to keep working for their current employer for up to 12 more months. The end game: permanent residence in Québec. Thus, the measure is available only to those who've received an invitation from the province to submit a Demande de Selection Permanente (DSP).

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

New Laws

Mar 18: New red-tape reduction legislation that abolishes the annual royalty that sawmills in Québec must pay on timber from public forests is now in Committee. [Bill 11](#) also revises the pricing of such timber, which will now be based on a minimum rate that's adjusted monthly according to the average profitability of companies and market conditions.

Training

Mar 6: Québec put out a first call for proposals from small and medium enterprises interested in government funding for training projects to help workers develop AI skills under the new \$10 million Productivity-Skills program. Submitted projects must be led by eligible collective promoters, such as a sectoral workforce committee, employers' association, or union, and target workers from at least two companies. Deadline [to apply](#): June 1.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent AI privacy, discrimination, and other liability risks.

Training

Mar 9: The governments of Canada and Québec announced a new Union Training and Innovation Program (UTIP) investment of \$24.7 million over five years to support skills training for apprentices in 18 designated Red Seal trades in the province considered essential to reducing Canada's carbon emissions. The new UTIP initiative will benefit up to 3,750 apprentices and journeypersons in Québec over a five-year period.

New Laws

Feb 18: Canada Economic Development (CED) announced over \$33 million in funding for 28 different national defence-related projects in Québec. The investment is part of the federal government's new Regional Defence Investment Initiative (RDII) to rebuild the Canadian Armed Forces and bolster the national industrial base

on which it relies.

New Laws

Feb 19: Québec company Cecobois will receive \$580,000 in federal funding from the Green Construction through Wood (GCWood) program to implement new projects aimed at documenting and raising awareness of the benefits of using wood to decarbonize the construction sector. These activities will help increase the use of wood and bio-based insulation materials while promoting carbon neutrality in non-residential and multi-residential buildings.

New Laws

Mar 4: The Québec Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry published for 45 days of public comment a [draft regulation](#) amending the *Mining Regulation*. Key issues addressed include annual fees for mining concession holders, financial provisions in restoration of sand and gravel pits leases, costs related to certain exchanges with local and indigenous communities as accepted exploration work, and standards relating to provisional financial guarantees.

Health & Safety

Feb 25: CNESST issued a new [Regulation](#) that pushes back the deadline for complying with new OHS certification training requirements for the first cohort of workplace safety committee members and health and safety representatives by six months.

CASES

Termination: Can Laid Off Employee's Employment Continue After Recall Period Expires?

The union filed a grievance contesting the termination of a construction company employee as part of a reorganization. The validity of the claim turned on whether the employment relationship had continued beyond the four-month recall period specified in the Collective Agreement. The arbitrator said it did and that, as a result, the termination was a disciplinary measure subject to arbitration. From there, it was just one small step to rule the termination arbitrary and order reinstatement. The union's victory proved short lived when the court found that the arbitrator went too far in ruling that the employment relationship still existed even though the recall period had expired. Now Québec's highest court, the Court of Appeal, will have the final word having ruled that the union has the right to appeal the lower court's decision. We'll let you know when the decision comes down [[Syndicat des travailleurs de la construction du Québec \(CSD\) v. Sintra inc. \(division Ouest\) \(Groupe Colas Québec\)](#), 2026 QCCA 270 (CanLII), February 26, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to comply with [temporary layoff requirements](#).

Drugs & Alcohol: Alcohol Addiction Is No Excuse for Stealing Cash from the Register

Four days after getting fired, a cashier told her employer, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), that she had an alcohol use disorder disability. The cashier began specialized addiction treatment therapy and AA and the doctors agreed on a gradual return to work plan. Two days into the plan, the cashier admitted to stealing money from the cash drawer. AA terminated her after the investigation confirmed that the cashier had stolen money and a bottle of liquor. Blaming the theft on the cashier's alcohol disorder, the union filed a grievance against AA for failing to accommodate her disability. Based on the expert medical testimony, the Québec arbitrator concluded that there was no connection between the disability and the misconduct and that AA had just cause to terminate—after all, how can an employer reasonably be expected to trust a cashier who admits to robbing the register [[Syndicat des employés de magasin et de bureau de la Société des alcools du Québec \(SEMB-CSN\) v Société des alcools du Québec](#), 2026 CanLII 7377 (QC SAT), January 30, 2026].

Action Point: Although the employer did prevail in this case, 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 addiction](#).

Health & Safety: OK to Suspend Veteran Crane Operator for Negligence

A steel beam construction company suspended a veteran union worker five days without pay for allegedly ignoring his safety training during an overhead crane lifting operation. The Québec arbitrator upheld the suspension based on evidence that in his rush to carry out the operation, the worker made a “cascade of errors” that a person with such extensive experience wouldn't normally make, such as not taking the necessary time to properly assess the load and miscalculating the load as containing five rather than three beams. Once he realized that the chain he was using was too long to contain the bundle, he should have stopped the operation, recalculated the load, and gotten the proper chain. Having displayed “negligence,” the worker deserved to be suspended [[International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers, Local 711 v. Canam Group Inc.](#), 2026 CanLII 4607 (QC SAT), January 22, 2026].