

# HR Compliance Readiness Self-Assessment 2026



## **2025 Was a Turning Point for HR. What Canadian Employers Must Do Next**

As 2025 comes to a close, many Canadian HR professionals feel like they have been running uphill with a compliance binder in one hand and a culture mandate in the other. It was a year of

constant adjustment. New legislation, shifting tribunal expectations, rising accommodation complexity, labour shortages, remote work tensions, and a growing gap between policy and practice all collided at once.

If 2024 was about awareness, 2025 was about consequences.

Across Canada, human rights complaints increased, courts continued to refine employer obligations, governments pushed transparency and accountability, and employees became more informed and more willing to challenge decisions they perceived as unfair. HR teams were no longer just policy administrators. They became risk managers, cultural translators, and crisis responders.

This report looks back at what defined HR and HR compliance in 2025, the lessons employers should have absorbed, and what is likely coming in 2026. It is written for Canadian HR leaders who want fewer surprises next year and more control over outcomes.

### **How to Use This Report and Why It Exists**

This special report was created for Canadian HR leaders who spent much of 2025 reacting rather than planning.

- It is not a legal
- It is not a trend
- It is not a prediction

It is a practical reflection on what actually went wrong for employers in 2025, why those issues escalated, and how HR can regain control in 2026.

You can read this report straight through, but it is designed to be used in layers

depending on your role and urgency.

If you are an HR leader under pressure, start with the self-assessment. It will quickly tell you where your organization is most exposed.

If you are preparing to brief senior leadership or a board, use the executive brief and the compliance heat map. They frame HR risk in governance terms leaders understand.

If you are rebuilding manager capability, focus on the sections that unpack how decisions are judged and where managers continue to misunderstand their obligations.

If you are planning the first quarter of 2026, use the 90-day reset plan as your anchor. It is deliberately realistic and designed to reduce risk quickly.

This report is meant to be marked up, shared selectively, and returned to throughout the year.

### **What Makes This Report Different**

Most HR content focuses on what employers should do in theory.

This report focuses on what happened in practice.

Every section is grounded in:

- real complaint patterns
- tribunal reasoning
- manager behavior HR actually observed
- pressure points that emerged repeatedly in 2025

It avoids generic checklists because those did not protect employers last year.

Instead, it emphasizes judgment, process, documentation, and capability, because those were the difference between issues resolving quietly and escalating publicly.