

HR Insider Newsletter – October 2026



October's **HR Insider Newsletter** looks at several areas where HR's responsibilities are expanding beyond traditional employment administration.

We start with HR's role in workplace safety and compliance communication. Having the right policy isn't enough if employees don't understand what it means, managers communicate it inconsistently, or critical information never reaches the people who need it. The newsletter looks at how HR can work with OHS and operational leaders to turn complex requirements into practical, accessible workplace messages.

Cybersecurity is another growing HR responsibility. Employee files often contain some of an organization's most sensitive information, from banking and benefits data to medical information and home addresses. This month's workplace checklist covers employee cybersecurity training, passwords and MFA, access controls, remote work, incident response and an increasingly important issue for HR teams: establishing clear rules around the use of AI and the information employees can enter into AI systems.

We also examine proposed **Bill C-35** and why forced-labour compliance could become an HR issue for Canadian companies with international supply chains. HR may increasingly be asked to help assess recruitment practices, wages, working conditions, migrant labour, recruitment agencies and other employment practices within supplier networks.

The October edition also includes new case alerts involving workplace searches, sleeping on the job in a safety-sensitive position, workplace harassment, overtime eligibility and employee resignations, along with our latest cross-Canada Month-in-Review. Finally, Ask the Expert tackles a deceptively difficult HRIS question: how employers should track prior service when a former employee is rehired.

Key Takeaways

- **Communication is part of compliance.** HR should make sure safety and compliance requirements are understandable, accessible and communicated consistently by managers, HR and OHS.
- **Cybersecurity is now an HR issue.** Protecting employee data requires training, appropriate access controls, secure technology practices and a clear response plan when something goes wrong.
- **AI needs workplace rules.** Employees need to know which AI tools are approved and, just as importantly, what confidential, personal or proprietary information

must never be entered into them.

- **Supply-chain compliance may increasingly involve HR.** Proposed Bill C-35 highlights the need for organizations to understand labour practices not only among direct suppliers but farther down their supply chains.
- **Safety can fundamentally change the disciplinary analysis.** Recent cases involving drug inspections and sleeping on the job demonstrate the additional weight that genuine safety risks can carry.
- **Job titles don't determine overtime entitlement.** Calling someone a supervisor or manager won't necessarily make them exempt from employment standards requirements.
- **Resignation must be clear and voluntary.** HR shouldn't assume that a resignation letter automatically resolves questions about whether an employee genuinely intended to quit.
- **Keep rehire dates and recognized service separate.** Where an employee returns after a genuine break in employment, HR can preserve the current rehire date while separately documenting prior service used for vacation, benefits, seniority or other entitlements.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH

<https://hrinsider.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Colman-11254331.mp3>

IMPORTANT DATES

October

October 1–Manitoba–General minimum wage increases 40 cents to \$16.40 per hour.

October 1–Nova Scotia–General minimum wage increases 25 cents to \$17.00 per hour.

October 1–Ontario–General minimum wage increases 35 cents to \$17.95 per hour.

[SEE MORE...](#)

THIS MONTH'S CONTENT IN FULL

- [HR's Role in Safety and Compliance Communications](#)
- [Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Best Practices: A Workplace Checklist for Protecting Your Organization and Employees](#)
- [How New Bill C-35 Forced Labour Import Ban Will Affect HR Directors](#)
- [Month In Review](#)
- [Ask The Expert – Tracking Prior Service After Rehire](#)

ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND READING

[How to create a legally sound drug testing policy](#) at your workplace.

Get help in [determining whether sleeping on the job](#) is just cause to terminate.

Find out more about the [laws governing free speech and political speech](#) in the workplace.

Find out [how to impose fair restrictions without violating employees' rights](#).

Find out more about [overtime exemption for "manager" requirements across Canada](#).

Find out more about the [law of resignation](#) and how to avoid inadvertent wrongful dismissal by wrongfully assuming that an employee who no longer works for you has resigned.