

# Mental Stress – 2023 Year in Review



## **FEDERAL**

### **LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Feb 6:** The national suicide mortality rate in 2019 was 12.1 per 100,000, 4,528 deaths, according to a new [government report](#). Suffocation was the leading cause of suicide deaths. Suicide rates were higher among males in all age groups. However, hospitalization for intentional self-harm was higher among females at 83 per 100,000, versus 49 per 100,000 males.

**Action Point:** Create a [legally sound policy](#) for accommodating employees with mental disabilities

## **NEW BRUNSWICK**

### **LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Aug 8:** WorkSafeNB began [public consultations](#) on whether to seek changes to the *Workers Compensation Act* that would make post-traumatic stress disorder presumptively work-related when diagnosed in a correctional officer after a work-related incident. The same presumption already applies to police officers, firefighters and paramedics.

**Action Point:** Create a [legally sound policy](#) for accommodating employees with mental disabilities

## **NOVA SCOTIA**

### **LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Feb 22:** Nova Scotia launched a [new Access Wellness service](#) offering residents free one-on-one counseling for general mental health concerns, including anxiety, job loss, grief, substance abuse and relationship issues, as well as couples and family counseling.

**Action Point:** Create a [legally sound policy](#) for accommodating employees with mental disabilities

**Nov 9:** Nova Scotia officially adopted [Bill 332](#) providing workers comp benefits to workers who suffer gradual onset of traumatic mental stress due to work-related stressors, effective Sept. 1, 2024. Current rules limit coverage to acute mental stress caused by a discrete traumatic event that happens at work, like witnessing a co-worker's death.

**Action Point:** Find out about [workers comp coverage of mental stress claims](#) in Canada

**Nov 23:** The Nova Scotia WCB began public review of [proposed changes](#) to its current work-related mental stress coverage rules of psychological injuries in response to the passage of [Bill 332](#) making gradual onset of traumatic mental stress a compensable injury. Deadline to comment: Feb. 15.

## **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

### **LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mar 20:** Despite moderate declines in 2022, medical visits related to anxiety are still above pre-pandemic levels. Those are among the findings of a new GNWT [report](#) analyzing the long term social impacts of the public health measures it implemented during the pandemic to prevent the spread of COVID.

**Action Point:** Create a [legally sound policy](#) for accommodating employees with mental disabilities