

Month in Review – Federal



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

Apr 1: The minimum wage for federally regulated workers increased 40 cents to \$18.15 per hour, or the minimum wage of the province or territory in which they work, whichever is higher. Jurisdictions with current minimum wage rates above \$18.15 include British Columbia, Nunavut, and Yukon.

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

Training

Mar 11: The federal government launched a new Employment Insurance (EI) [Worker Retention Grant](#) offering \$102.7 million to employers who provide training opportunities enabling workers to upskill while maintaining up to 70% of their regular income while participating in a Work-Sharing program. The Grant, which will be available to all sizes of employers from all sectors, will allow businesses to provide top-ups to their employees' income while on Work-Sharing.

Action Point: If your company is feeling the effects of tariffs, you need to find out about the [temporary EI Work Sharing program changes](#).

Payroll

Apr 1: Service Canada implemented changes designed to improve the EI appeals process. Appeals that used to go the Social Security Tribunal will now be reviewed by a new EI Board of Appeal made up of three individuals—a presiding member appointed by the government and one each appointed by employer and worker organizations.

Employment Benefits

Apr 8: Newly published federal [pension regulations](#) simplify the processes used by plan administrators to transfer the benefits of missing and unlocatable plan members and beneficiaries to the Bank of Canada. Such transfers are required to ensure that the unclaimed benefits don't remain as a liability on the plan's books for an indefinite period. In addition to imposing additional costs and administrative

burdens, such liabilities can prevent terminated plans from fully winding up.

New Laws

Apr 20: The federal government posted 100,000 Canada Summer Jobs on the Job Bank website and mobile app. The CSJ program offers non-profit employers wage subsidies of up to 100% and public and private sector employers up to 50% of the provincial or territorial minimum wage to hire youth ages 15 to 30 so they can gain summer work experience.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Game Plan](#) to comply with special Occupational Health and Safety and employment standards rules protecting young employees.

New Laws

Apr 7: The federal government announced awards of \$30 million to create 900 employment and skills training opportunities over two years for youth across the country in the natural resource sectors, including energy, forestry, mining, earth sciences, and clean technology. Funding will be delivered through the Science and Technology Internship Program – Green Jobs to 10 organizations. The biggest recipients: Clean Nova Scotia Foundation (\$5.6 million), Environmental Careers Organization of Canada (located in Calgary) (\$5 million); and Electricity Human Resources Canada (Ottawa) (\$3.08 million).

New Laws

Apr 20: In response to rocketing fuel prices related to the Middle East conflict, the federal government temporarily suspend the federal fuel excise tax on gasoline, diesel fuel, and aviation fuels, effective immediately, and running through Labour Day, September 7, 2026. Heating oil is exempt from this tax and there's no federal excise tax on natural gas or propane. Provincial governments also collect their own gasoline and diesel taxes.

Discrimination

Apr 14: The House passed and the Senate is now debating [Bill C-9](#), making it a crime to wilfully promote hatred against any identifiable group by displaying certain symbols in a public place or intentionally obstruct or intimidate a person from attending a mosque or other public place of religious worship and repealing the requirement that the Attorney General consent to the prosecution of hate propaganda offences.

Discrimination

Apr 13: The Canadian Human Rights Commission [reported](#) that it received over 5,600 discrimination complaints in 2025, a five-year high. Most complaints alleged employment discrimination. The most common cited grounds of discrimination were Disability (58%), Race/Colour/National Origin/Ethnicity (48%), Sex (23%), Family Status (18%), and Religion (16%). The reason these numbers don't add up to 100% is that many complaints allege multiple grounds of discrimination.

Action Point: Beware of certain kinds of seemingly legitimate [employment practices](#) that may have the effect of inadvertently perpetuating racial discrimination and increasing your liability risks.

Privacy

Apr 2: The government launched public review of the *Privacy Act*, adopted in 1983 to require federal institutions to safeguard the confidentiality of the personal information entrusted to them. The Treasury Board, which administers the Act, has [proposed changes](#) to modernize the law for the digital age. Deadline to [comment](#): July 10.

Health & Safety

Apr 10: To enable construction workers to move between jurisdictions without having to undergo safety re-training each time they move, federal, provincial, and territorial labour ministers meeting in Québec City agreed to harmonize their Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) curricula for Working at Heights and Mobile Elevating Work Platforms training by January 1, 2027. The ministers will meet again to discuss harmonizing OHS Hoisting and Rigging and Trenching training before the end of the year.

Health & Safety

Mar 27: Amendments to the [Human Pathogens and Toxins Act](#) (HPTA) passed in December received Royal Assent and took effect. The HPTA regulates use and possession of human pathogens and toxins across all sectors, including research at universities and hospitals, vaccine development in the pharmaceutical industry, and quality control in the food industry.

Workplace Violence

Apr 13: Parliament is one step away from adopting [Bill C-225](#) amending the *Criminal Code* to create new offences for engaging in intimate partner violence and ban peace officers from releasing persons arrested for an intimate partner offence if they've committed such an offence in the last five years or are at large on a release order for such an offence.

Action Point: Domestic and intimate partner violence becomes an OHS issue and liability risk for employers when it happens at the victim's workplace. Find out [how to protect your employees](#) from the risk of workplace domestic violence.

CASES

Privacy: Bus Company's New AI Drivers' Surveillance System Is Too Intrusive

A bus company installed an artificial intelligence (AI) remote surveillance system in all vehicles, using cameras mounted on windshields to capture both the interior, including the driver's workstation, and front of the vehicle. The federal arbitrator ruled that the newly installed AI-based Samsara system gathered much more extensive personal data than the conventional video cameras the company had previously used and that the resulting harms to drivers' Charter privacy rights outweighed the relatively minor improvements to safety. Moreover, the AI system's remote real-time viewing and other features allowed the company to use the system to gather and access data for purposes other than safety. Result: The company had to stop using the system within 90 days and pay \$100 in privacy damages to each affected driver. The company appealed but the court upheld the ruling [[Coach Canada Workers' Union \(CSN\) v. NewCAN Coach Company ULC \(Coach Canada\)](#), 2026 CanLII 27321 (CA SA), March 5, 2026].

Action Point: This case illustrates the importance of [ensuring that digital solutions used to monitor employees remain within personal privacy boundaries](#) and why you should consider implementing a [legally sound electronic monitoring policy](#).

Health & Safety: COVID Vaccination Refusal Is Just Cause to Fire Airline Employee

WestJet fired an aircraft maintenance employee for disobeying its mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy. The Canada Industrial Relations Board ruled that the policy was a reasonable safety measure and that WestJet had just cause to terminate. The federal court dismissed the employee's appeal, finding that the Board's ruling was reasonable and the hearing was fair [[Henrikson v. Westjet](#), 2026 FCA 39 (CanLII), February 24, 2026].

Action Point: Dealing with vaccine refusals, whether COVID-19, influenza, measles, or any other pathogen, is very tricky even in health-sensitive settings. Find out how to avoid discrimination liability risks when [enforcing a mandatory vaccination or other infectious illness workplace safety policy](#).

2026

[March 2026 Month In Review](#)

2025

[December 2025 Month In Review](#)
[February 2026 Month In Review](#)
[November 2025 Month In Review](#)
[January 2026 Month In Review](#)
[October 2025 Month In Review](#)
[April 2026 Month In Review](#)
[September 2025 Month In Review](#)
[August 2025 Month In Review](#)
[July 2025 Month In Review](#)
[June 2025 Month In Review](#)
[May 2025 Month In Review](#)
[April 2025 Month In Review](#)
[March 2025 Month In Review](#)
[February 2025 Month In Review](#)
[January 2025 Month In Review](#)

2024

[December 2024 Month In Review](#)

2023

[December 2023 Month in Review](#)
[November 2024 Month In Review](#)
[November 2024 Month In Review](#)
[October 2024 Month In Review](#)
[October 2024 Month In Review](#)
[August 2024 Month In Review](#)
[September 2023 Month in Review](#)
[July 2024 Month In Review](#)
[August 2023 Month in Review](#)
[June 2024 Month In Review](#)
[July 2023 Month in Review](#)
[May 2024 Month In Review](#)
[June 2023 Month in Review](#)
[April 2024 Month In Review](#)
[May 2023 Month in Review](#)
[March 2024 Month In Review](#)
[April 2023 Month in Review](#)
[February 2024 Month in Review](#)
[March 2023 Month in Review](#)
[January 2024 Month in Review](#)
[February 2023 Month in Review](#)
[January 2023 Month In Review](#)