Month in Review – Nova Scotia



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Overtime

Sep 18: The Nova Scotia Assembly passed Bill 256 amending the *Labour Standards Code* (LSC) by reducing the overtime threshold from 48 to 44 hours per week. The Bill also expands overtime pay eligibility to include extra hours that are voluntary and permitted, not just overtime hours required by employers. Effective date: April 1, 2027.

Action Point: Find out about the 10 most common overtime mistakes Canadian companies make and what you must do to avoid them.

Payroll

Sep 18: Nova Scotia passed Bill 256 extending *Labour Standards Code* pay frequency and pay protections to tips and gratuities while setting new rules for tip pooling and redistribution and the employers, directors, and shareholders that may participate in such arrangements. The Bill also clarifies that a tip or gratuity is the employee's property. Effective date: April 1, 2027.

Action Point: Find out when tips and gratuities are subject to EI and CPP deductions.

New Laws

Oct 15: Nova Scotia and Canada entered into a new offshore wind partnership hoping to cash in on what the sides are describing as "one of the largest economic development opportunities in generations." The governments will invest $100 million to support the research, data collection, and analysis required to advance offshore wind development and position Nova Scotia as a global clean energy leader. Nova Scotia's offshore winds are among the strongest and most consistent in the world.

New Laws

Oct 1: Nova Scotia began accepting applications for the annual Heating Assistance Rebate Program, which for this year is $400. Families earning a combined net income of up to $45,000 and single-person households earning a net income up to $30,000 are

eligible for the rebate whether they rent or own, provided they directly pay for home heat. Guaranteed Income Supplement or income assistance recipients are also eligible. Deadline to apply: March 31.

New Laws

Oct 1: Nova Scotia began imposing a new $500 levy on owners of electric vehicles; the levy for plug-in hybrid vehicles is $250. The new levies, which are in addition to the vehicle registration fee, apply to passenger vehicles, light trucks, and vans, but not to vehicles used by municipalities, fire departments, or police.

Discrimination

Oct 9: The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission published a summary of the feedback it received during recent public consultations on modernizing the province's human rights system. Comments focused mostly on ways to improve how the Commission handles, processes, and resolves discrimination complaints.

Action Point: Beware of seemingly legitimate employment practices that may have the effect of inadvertently perpetuating racial discrimination and increasing your liability risks.

Privacy

Sep 18: The Nova Scotia Assembly passed Bill 269, aka the *Public Safety Act*, to expand the legal remedies available to victims whose intimate images are published online without their consent, including via artificial intelligence (AI)-generated image alteration or fabrication. The legislation also includes new protections for livestreamed content.

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

Health & Safety

Sep 9: The time-loss injury rate in the province fell to 1.12 per 100 workers in August 2026, WCB Nova Scotia reported. The agency's target rate for the entire year is 1.25. There were 194 time-loss injuries (those causing workers to miss three or more work days) during the month, as compared to 221 in January.

Workplace Violence

Sep 29: The federal government's Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) is investing up to $1.98 million to prevent gun violence in Halifax. The BSCF provides funding to municipalities and Indigenous communities for local prevention and intervention initiatives that address the root causes of gun and gang violence.

Workers' Compensation

Oct 2: WCB Nova Scotia upgraded its payments system. Direct deposit payments will be made on the same day as before, albeit up to 12 hours later in the day. Payments typically processed on a Friday or the day before a holiday will appear in workers' accounts on the next business day after the weekend or holiday period. Workers who submit multiple medical expenses on the same day will now receive one payment for the total amount, rather than individual payments for each submission.

Workers’ Compensation

Oct 1: Starting in 2027, WCB Nova Scotia will index workers’ compensation benefits to 100% of inflation, up to 3% per year (as measured by the Consumer Price Index). Meanwhile, employer premiums are also decreasing for the first time in over a decade.

Action Point: Find out how to create a vibrant workplace health and safety culture to prevent injuries and workers’ compensation claims at your company.

CASES

Health & Safety: Small Business Owner Gets $35,000 Fine—Prosecution Wanted $65,000

After a worker’s life-altering fall injury, the operator of a small roofing business pled guilty to three OHS violations, including failure to implement a fall protection plan and ensure that workers use a fall arrest and work-positioning system. The prosecution asked for administrative monetary penalties of $65,000; the operator argued for $10,000. The Nova Scotia court split the difference, imposing a sentence of $35,000 without any surcharges, citing the defendant’s genuine remorse, immediate call to 911, guilty pleas, and small, seasonal business [*R v Hubley*, 2026 NSPC 45 (CanLII), September 4, 2026].

Action Point: Find out how to create a vibrant workplace health and safety culture to prevent injuries, prosecution, and OHS fines and penalties at your workplace.

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