

Month In Review – Québec



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minimum Wage

May 1: Québec increased its general minimum wage 50 cents to \$16.60 per hour. The minimum wage for workers earning tips rose 40 cents to \$13.30. The raspberry pickers minimum wage increased 15 cents to \$4.93 per kilogram and the strawberry pickers rate increased four cents to \$1.32 per kilogram.

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

Labour Relations

Apr 2: The Québec Assembly passed [Bill 3](#) imposing new rules on construction union governance, including the requirement that: i. union dues deducted in advance by employers include principal dues and optional dues; ii. establishment or modification of the amount of the principal dues be authorized by secret ballot by a majority of voting members; iii. votes over union dues, strikes and signing of collective agreements be held over a period of at least 24 hours; and iv. only optional dues be used to finance certain determined activities, where those activities are financed by union dues.

Labour Relations

Apr 2: Newly tabled [Bill 27](#) proposes over a dozen changes to rules governing collective agreements and joint committee procedures in the construction industry. It also amends the *Labour Standards Act* to allow the government to establish sector-based labour standards for employers and employees in a trade, industry, commerce, or occupation that would have been covered by a decree had it not expired.

New Laws

Apr 9: The governments of Canada and Québec shook hands on a Workforce Tariff Response agreement that will provide \$122.5 million over three years to support businesses within the softwood lumber, steel, and other industries affected by tariffs. The money will also be used to provide new skills development training for

the impacted workers.

Action Point: Find out about the [8 ways the U.S. tariffs affect](#) Canadian workplaces and HR activities.

New Laws

Apr 2: Royal Assent for [Bill 15](#) which amends the *Professional Code* by streamlining the regulatory processes of the professional system and broaden certain professional practices in the field of health and social services.

Action Point: Find out about the [5 ways the new interprovincial free trade and labour mobility regulations impact HR operations](#).

New Laws

Apr 11: Applications for admission to study programs leading to one of the five most in-demand trades in the Québec construction industry increased by 80% between January and March 2026, the government announced. More than 7,600 people applied for admission to programs in the trades of carpenter, electrician, lineman, plumber, and refrigeration technician during the period.

New Laws

Apr 2: New red-tape reduction legislation that abolishes the annual royalty that sawmills in Québec must pay on timber from public forests is now in Committee. [Bill 11](#) also revises the pricing of such timber, which will now be based on a minimum rate that's adjusted monthly according to the average profitability of companies and market conditions. The government plans to phase in the new wood pricing system over a two-year transition period.

New Laws

Apr 2: Québec announced that it's renewing the Mining Research and Innovation Support Program (PARIDM) for three years. PARIDM provides financial support to mining companies for research and development and innovation projects that promote environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable development.

Health & Safety

Mar 11: Newly published [draft OHS regulations](#) would require employers to report health and safety information about specific contaminants and hazardous materials in their workplace to the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) every three years. The agency would then share that data with other government agencies in the interest of advancing public safety.

CASES

Discipline: OK to Suspend but Not Fire Ski Lift Operator for Using Tablet on Duty

The owner of a ski lodge suspended and later fired a worker that he spotted glancing at the tablet on his lap while operating a ski lift with skiers on it, in violation

of the lodge's zero-tolerance no electronics use at work safety policy. Based on the incident, the Québec arbitrator upheld the 10-day suspension but not termination. The title "zero-tolerance" belied the fact that other workers had received only warnings for the same offence. This was the worker's first offence and there was no evidence to suggest he was unwilling or unable to learn from his mistake and correct his conduct or that the "relationship of trust had been irreparably broken," the arbitrator concluded [[Union of Workers of Val Saint-Côme v. Val Saint-Côme Tourist Resort Inc.](#), 2026 CanLII 17900 (QC SAT), February 27, 2026].

Action Point: Cellphones, headsets, and other personal devices that employees use on the job may cause distractions that lead to accidents and injuries, especially where employees have safety-sensitive jobs like operating ski lifts. One way to solve the problem is to implement an [effective Cellphone/Mobile Device Workplace Use Policy](#).

Labour Relations: Union Took Too Long to Grieve Employer's Unilateral Selection of PPE

A paper mill pissed off the union by selecting the PPE workers must use without consulting it or the workplace joint health and safety committee (JHSC). The union also complained about the PPE selected, including cut-proof gloves that hindered performance of certain tasks like working on touch screens and handling double-sided tape. Wearing gloves also put workers at greater risk of injury on machines, especially those with sharp edges, the union contended. The mill argued that the actions were necessary to standardize its OHS policies in North America. It also noted that it took the union over a year to file the grievance as opposed to the 20 days required by the collective agreement. The Québec arbitrator agreed that the grievance was too late. But it denied the mill's request to penalize the union for abusing the grievance process. The question of whether an employer can unilaterally override the terms of a collective agreement simply to standardize its OHS policies was an important legal issue, the arbitrator explained while also faulting the mill for not putting its own grievance against the union in writing [[Teamsters Québec v Cascades Emballages Carton-Caisse Drummondville](#), 2026 CanLII 16810 (QC SAT), March 4, 2026].

Accommodations: Failure to Promote Injured Worker Is Disability Discrimination

Hydro-Québec refused to promote a Machine Operator to Chief Mechanic due to the functional limitations she experienced because of her work injury. In addition to violating the collective agreement, the union claimed that denying the promotion was disability discrimination and failure to make reasonable accommodations. Letting the Operator do the Chief Mechanic job would be dangerous and totally restructuring the position around her capabilities would be undue hardship, HQ countered. The Québec arbitrator upheld the grievance citing the lack of evidence that the Operator was incapable of working safely as a Chief Mechanic. In fact, the evidence suggested just the opposite. Moreover, HQ didn't even consider the possibility of making reasonable accommodations; it simply rejected her because she was disabled. Result: The arbitrator ordered HQ to make the promotion and left the door open for damages to compensate the Operator for being excluded [[Hydro-Québec v. Syndicat des employés-es de métier d'Hydro-Québec, section Locale 1500](#), 2026 CanLII 12740 (QC SAT), February 11, 2026].

Action Point: Breakdowns in the accommodations process are a frequent source of discrimination claims. Find out how to implement [Accommodations Best Practices](#) to

avoid such problems at your company.

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