

The 10 Most Significant New OHS Laws of 2025



Part of your job as an OHS coordinator is to brief your CEO and other executive officers about new safety laws and regulations in your province and the other parts of Canada where your company operates. And in 2024, there were a number of such new laws, some of which take effect this year. Unfortunately, some of these important new OHS laws have flown completely under the radar. Here's a rundown of the Top 10 new OHS laws you may want to tell your CEO about.

1. New PPE for Women Requirements in Ontario

On December 20, 2024, Ontario passed a major piece of employment reform legislation called the *Working for Workers Six Act* ([Bill 229](#)) that, among other things, adds a new provision to the *OHS Act* requiring employers to ensure that any PPE and personal protective clothing provided to, worn, or used by workers fits properly and is suitable for use by women and individuals of all body types. The Ontario Ministry of Labour is expected to publish new regulations listing the specific factors that employers must consider in complying with the new PPE rules by Spring 2025.

What To Do: In addition to being on the lookout for the new MOL regulations, [OHS coordinators seeking to protect their women workers](#) must recognize that PPE has traditionally been

designed for men and doesn't work for women or men with varying body types. The approach of shrinking the equipment down to smaller sizes won't solve the problem. Compliance strategies:

- Assess the PPE you supply and/or require your workers to use and determine whether it's suitable for both women and men.
- If you determine that men and women need different kinds of PPE, provide the same range of sizes for both.
- Ensure that women try on several sizes or types of PPE before using it to verify that it's the best fit.
- Seek out PPE suppliers that provide a range of sizes for both men and women.
- Ensure that PPE suppliers have properly assessed the appropriateness of their equipment for both men and women.
- If you can't get hardhats that are small enough for female workers, consider adding a chin strap to provide a better fit.
- Look for safety goggles with an adjustable strap to ensure a snug fit and eliminate potentially dangerous gaps.
- Keep in mind that women generally have smaller ear canals than men and that disposable, foam ear plugs may fit them better and more comfortably than pre-moulded types.
- Make sure women workers wear safety footwear designed for the anatomy of the female foot.
- Provide platforms or stools so shorter workers can easily reach equipment controls without having to strain or stretch and run the risk of musculoskeletal injuries.
- Provide women workers smaller hand tools if needed.
- Establish mechanisms that workers can use to provide feedback on the suitability of their PPE either directly to you or the workplace JHSC.

2. New Minimum \$500,000 OHS Fines for Repeat Corporate Offenders in Ontario

The other key OHS change contained in Bill 229 is the establishment of a new mandatory minimum fine of \$500,000 against corporations convicted of repeat *OHS Act* offences resulting in death or serious injury to a worker within a 2-year period.

What To Do: OHS coordinators in Ontario should make it a priority to notify their officers of the new minimum fine and use it as leverage to secure the resources they need to keep their OHS programs compliant. That's because, while it doesn't change the substance of the OHS laws, the minimum fine gives corporations in Ontario a new incentive to comply with them, particularly companies that have been recently convicted of a violation resulting in a worker's death or serious injury.

3. New OHS Psychological Harassment Protections in Québec

Last March, after months of wrangling, Québec passed and proclaimed effective [Bill 42](#) adding new OHS and workers' compensation protections against workplace psychological harassment and sexual OHS violence in the workplace. The 3 key changes:

- New bans on taking reprisals against workers who report psychological harassment.
- Workers now have more time to file harassment complaints against their employers or ex-employers.
- Companies found liable for psychological harassment now face the risk of higher OHS fines and punitive damages.

What To Do: OHS coordinators in Québec should not only ensure

their CEOs are aware of but also recognize how the Bill 42 changes make it even more imperative to implement a legally sound [Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Game Plan](#) at their sites.

4. New Return-To-Work Requirements in BC

One of 2024's most significant new workers' compensation laws took effect on the very first day of the year when BC implemented regulations requiring employers and injured workers to cooperate in the return-to-work process by, among other things, establishing and maintaining communication as soon as practicable after a work injury occurs and identifying suitable work that the worker can do, if possible, at the worker's pre-injury wages.

What To Do: Employers in any province that imposes [mandatory re-employment rules](#) should implement a [game plan](#) for ensuring that injured workers return safely to the workplace. Such a plan should provide for the [involvement of supervisors](#) and development of an individualized [return to work plan](#) for each worker.

5. New First Aid Requirements in BC & PEI

[BC](#) and [PEI](#) became the latest provinces to revise their OHS first aid regulations in accordance with CSA standards.

What To Do: The most important change is the requirement that employers determine the first aid personnel, kits, and equipment the workplace must have by designating a competent person to conduct a workplace [first aid needs hazard assessment](#) in consultation with the JHSC, safety rep, or workers at the site. Previously, this determination was based

on a grid listing factors such as the number of workers, operations conducted, and proximity of the site to a hospital. In BC, employers must now also conduct annual first aid drills.

6. New Radiation Safety Rules in Saskatchewan

[Major changes](#) to radiation safety regulations took effect in Saskatchewan in August. The key changes OHS coordinators in the province need to stay on top of include the new duty of radiation equipment operator/owner duty to notify pregnant workers of radiation risks. However, the new regulations also simplify compliance by eliminating the previous duty to report routine worker doses and fees for x-ray equipment registration, leak test analysis, radon measurement, calibrating radiation monitoring equipment, and inspections. They also cut the dose recordkeeping period to 5 years.

What To Do: Implementing a [Radiation Safety & Compliance Game Plan](#) is essential in not only Saskatchewan but all parts of Canada where:

- Ionizing or non-ionizing radiation is used (see the end of this article for explanations of these types of radiation).
- Equipment emitting radiation is installed, operated, or serviced.
- There are sources of ultrasonic energy, non-ionizing, and ionizing radiation.

7. New Workplace Harassment Policy Requirements in Nova Scotia

On September 20, the Assembly passed [Bill 464](#), the *Stronger Workplaces for Nova Scotia Act*, adding a new provision to the

OHS Act requiring employers to create and implement a policy to prevent harassment in the workplace by September 1, 2025. The government will issue new regulations fleshing out the requirements in early 2025.

What To Do: While keeping an eye out for the new regulations, OHS coordinators in Nova Scotia can get a jump by architecting a [workplace harassment prevention policy](#) based on the OHS requirements of other jurisdictions. Such a policy should include, at a minimum:

- A statement that all workers are entitled to a workplace free of harassment and that workplace harassment will not be tolerated regardless of who commits it.
- A definition of what is and is not harassment.
- A description of the procedures for reporting harassment and assurances that nobody will suffer retaliation for making such a report.
- An explanation of how reports of harassment will be investigated.
- An explanation of the support the company will provide to harassment victims.

8. New Washroom Sanitation Requirements in Ontario

In November, Ontario added a new *OHS Act* requirement that employers ensure washroom facilities they provide for worker use are kept in a clean and sanitary condition. New Section 25.3(3) further specifies that employers must keep, maintain, and make available washroom facilities cleaning records of “as prescribed.” On December 14, the MOL published new [regulations](#) to “prescribe” those requirements.

What To Do: To comply with the new regulations, which take effect on January 1, 2026, you must ensure that the required cleaning records:

- Are posted either in a conspicuous place in or near the washroom where they're likely to come to workers' attention or electronically where they can be accessed by workers.
- Include directions on where and how to access the records if they're posted electronically.
- Include the date and time of the 2 most recent cleanings.

Slightly different rules apply to constructors at multi-employer construction project sites. Effective January 1, 2026, constructors must keep at the project:

- A record of the servicing of the facilities, including any associated cleaning and sanitizing, listing the date of all services for the past 6 months or the duration of the project (whichever is shorter), and:
- A copy of the document required for portable urinals, if any, which must be kept for the duration of the project.

9. New Construction Site Washroom Sanitation Requirements in BC

New [OHS regulations](#) took effect in BC in October requiring construction sites with 25 or more workers to have: i. Flush toilets connected to a sewer system or holding tank that uses clean water or a mixture of clean water and chemicals to flush; ii. Hand-washing facilities with soap and water; and iii. Well-maintained, clean, ventilated, and private washrooms.

What To Do: While [specific requirements vary slightly by jurisdiction](#), the [basic steps necessary for compliance](#) with OHS sanitation and toilets rules include ensuring that your own toilet facilities:

- Are of the right type for your particular site.

- Include at least the required minimum number of toilets.
- Are in a proper location.
- Are properly designed.
- Are properly equipped.
- Are properly maintained.

10. New Noise Protection Requirements in New Brunswick

[Regulatory changes](#) took effect in New Brunswick requiring employers to establish a hearing conservation code of practice, in consultation with the JHSC in a work area where noise exposure is above the levels specified in Sec. 30 of the [OHS General Regulations](#). The new rules also require hearing tests for exposed workers.

What To Do: Implementing a [hearing conservation program](#) is also an OHS requirement in Alberta, AB, BC, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan. Required hearing conservation measures are largely the same even in jurisdictions where written programs aren't specifically required.

Bottom Line: All companies that expose their workers to [noise hazards](#) should [develop a hearing conservation strategy](#), regardless of what they call it.