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Alberta provincial legislation guide

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Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion
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Introduction

This guide provides a brief overview of key employment, health and safety, privacy, and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) legislation in Alberta. For each piece of legislation, we outline why it is important to employers and how it relates to DEIA, who and what it applies to, the latest date of amendment, the key requirements for employers (highlighting how the legislation specifically affects workplace practices), and the penalties for non-compliance. This guide is intended for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

We encourage organizations to use this guide as a starting point for understanding their obligations under the law. However, this guide is not exhaustive, and there are details, exceptions, and nuances in the legislation that require further reading or consultation to fully understand and apply. Additionally, while the information and links provided are accurate at the time of publication, this guide is not updated with every legislative change. Users should review the relevant legislation to confirm current requirements.

While compliance with the law is the baseline, we also recommend that organizations go beyond compliance where possible, proactively building workplaces that prioritize safety, inclusion, and equity in policies, practices, and culture.

Note that this resource covers legislation specific to one province or territory. A Canadian federal legislation guide is also available.

Alberta Human Rights Act

Why this legislation matters

Under the Alberta Human Rights Act, all Albertans are entitled to equal treatment and protection from discrimination in significant areas of daily life. Specifically, the AHRA prohibits discrimination based on [protected grounds](#) in several key areas of employment.

Applies to

- Anyone who provides goods, services, housing, employment, or membership opportunities in Alberta. This includes:
 - Individuals living or working in Alberta.
 - Organizations, employers, landlords, service providers, and associations.
 - Both public and private sectors, including government agencies, businesses, schools, unions, and non-profits.

Latest amendment

- 2023-04-01

Requirements for employers

- Prohibit discrimination in the workplace.
- Investigate allegations of discrimination and respond to confirmed discrimination.
- Maintain non-discriminatory policies.
- Remove barriers related to protected grounds, fulfill their duty to accommodate, and protect the privacy of those involved.
- It is important to note that employers are responsible for the actions of employees.

Penalties for non-compliance

- Penalties focus on correcting discrimination.
- If discrimination is proven, the Human Rights Tribunal can order remedies such as compensation for lost wages or injury to dignity, reinstatement, or policy changes.
- Tribunal orders are enforceable through the courts, and failure to comply can lead to civil enforcement like asset seizure or contempt of court proceedings.

Further reading

- [Alberta Human Rights Act](#)
- [Resources](#), Alberta Human Rights Commission

Employment Standards Code

Why this legislation matters

The Employment Standards Code governs most employment relationships in the province, ensuring basic rights and protections for employees and outlining legal obligations for employers.

Applies to

- Most employers and employees in Alberta, whether full-time, part-time, temporary, or casual, including employees in both the public and private sectors.
- Certain occupations and industries have their own rules or exemptions, like farm workers, management, professionals like doctors and lawyers, and some commission-based roles.

Latest amendment

- 2024-12-05

Requirements for employers

- The Code sets out the minimum standards for things like:
 - Hours of work, rest periods, and overtime
 - Minimum wage
 - Vacation, general holidays, and leaves of absence
 - Termination notice and pay

Penalties for non-compliance

- Administrative penalties of up to \$10,000 per day.
- For serious violations, prosecution with fines up to \$100,000 for corporations and \$50,000 for individuals.
- The government may also publicly post the names of non-compliant employers, leading to reputational consequences.

Further reading

- [Employment Standards Code](#)
- [Employment Standards Regulation](#)
- [Employment Standards](#), Government of Alberta
- [Employment standards tool kit for employers](#), Government of Alberta

Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act

Why this legislation matters

The Protection of Privacy Act (POPA) and Access to Information Act (ATIA) govern how public-sector bodies collect, use, and disclose personal information, as well as how the public can access government records. They ensure organizations handle personal information ethically and operate transparently.

Applies to

- Public-sector bodies in Alberta.

Latest amendment

- 2025-06-11

Requirements for employers

- POPA governs how public-sector employers collect, use, store, and disclose employee information:
 - Employers may collect employee information only when necessary for employment purposes and must inform employees why it's collected.
 - Personal information can be used or shared only for its original purpose, unless consent or legal authorization allows otherwise.
 - Employers must protect information from unauthorized access, loss, or misuse.
- ATIA allows access to records held by public bodies in Alberta, as well as the right to request access to their own personal information. Notably, new categories of information are exempt from disclosure, including workplace investigations.

Penalties for non-compliance

- These new privacy Acts introduce higher maximum fines for non-compliance.
- Non-compliance with the ATIA can lead to fines up to \$50,000.
- Non-compliance with the POPA can lead to fines up to \$1,000,000 for organizations.

Further reading

- [Access to Information Act](#)
- [Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Access to Information Act \(ATIA\)](#), Government of Alberta
- [Protection of Privacy Act](#), Government of Alberta

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Why this legislation matters

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act outlines the duties of employers and workers to ensure a safe and healthy work environment and defines the rights of workers to be informed, involved, and protected from unsafe conditions.

Applies to

- Most employers, workers, and workplaces in Alberta, including prime contractors, suppliers, owners, self-employed persons, and contractors.

Latest amendment

- 2025-03-31

Requirements for employers

- Identify and control hazards, provide proper training, supervision, and equipment, and maintain health and safety policies and procedures appropriate to the work being done.
- Employers must also investigate incidents, take steps to prevent recurrence, and immediately report serious incidents and fatalities to Alberta OHS.
- Where required, employers must consult and cooperate with the joint work site health and safety committee or health and safety representative and cooperate with OHS officers during inspections or investigations.
- Ensure workers are informed of their rights, including the right to know about hazards, the right to participate, and the right to refuse unsafe work.

Penalties for non-compliance

- Stop-work orders.
- Administrative penalties of up to \$10,000 per day for each violation.
- Serious or willful violations can lead to court prosecution and fines up to \$500,000 for a first offence, with higher fines for subsequent ones, as well as possible jail time.

Further reading

- [OHS Act, regulation and code](#)
- [Guide to OHS: Employers](#), Government of Alberta

Personal Information Protection Act

Why this legislation matters

The Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) ensures that organizations collect, use, and protect personal information responsibly. It ensures that sensitive information is handled respectfully and securely, reducing the risk of misuse or discrimination.

Applies to

- Private-sector organizations in Alberta, including companies, partnerships, trade unions, and professional associations.
- Employees, volunteers, and contractors within those organizations, when handling personal information.

Latest amendment

- 2025-09-01

Requirements for employers

- Employers may collect, use, and disclose personal information only for reasonable, work-related purposes and must inform employees why their information is being collected and how it will be used.
- Consent is required in most cases, and information can only be used or shared for the stated purpose unless further consent is given.
- Employers must also protect personal information through appropriate security measures, allow employees to access and correct their own records, appoint a privacy officer to oversee compliance, and report any privacy breaches that could cause significant harm to the affected individuals or the organization.

Penalties for non-compliance

- The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner can issue orders requiring organizations to change practices, provide access to information, or correct records.
- Willful violations by organizations can lead to prosecution and fines up to \$100,000.

Further reading

- [Personal Information Protection Act](#)
- [Personal Information Protection Act](#), Government of Alberta

Workers' Compensation Act

Why this legislation matters

The Workers' Compensation Act establishes the workers' compensation system, which provides no-fault insurance coverage for workplace injuries and illnesses. The Act ensures all workers have equal access to injury benefits, rehabilitation, and return-to-work support.

Applies to

- Most employers and workers in Alberta, including both full-time and part-time employees and those in industries like construction, manufacturing, and healthcare.
- Some industries may be exempt, but they can choose to opt in for coverage.
- The Act is administered by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB-Alberta).

Latest amendment

- 2025-05-11

Requirements for employers

- Register with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) and pay premiums.
- Report workplace injuries or illnesses promptly and keep accurate records.
- Cooperate with WCB investigations.
- Ensure workers understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Support injured employees with modified or alternative duties when possible.

Penalties for non-compliance

- Failing to comply with requirements can lead to administrative penalties up to \$25,000 per day for each violation.
- Serious or willful violations may result in prosecution, including additional fines and possible imprisonment for responsible individuals.
- Stop-work orders, damage to reputation, and difficulties obtaining contracts.

Further reading

- [Workers' Compensation Act](#)
- [WCB-Alberta](#)
- [WCB-Alberta Employer Handbook \(PDF\)](#), WCB-Alberta