

Mar 19, 2026 (issue 1)

# OHNIG Newsletter

## Legislative Update for Ontario Occupational Health Nurses



The Occupational Health Nurses Interest Group (OHNIG) remains committed to supporting continuing education and fostering the professional growth of Occupational Health Nurses across Ontario.

The following legislative update provides a concise overview of recent and upcoming regulatory changes and amendments under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) **and the** Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA). Staying informed about these developments will help strengthen your practice, support informed decision-making, and promote the best possible outcomes in your daily work.

### ➤ [Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025 \(Bill 30\)](#)

Beginning in 2021, the Government of Ontario introduced a series of “Working for Workers” legislative initiatives aimed at enhancing worker protections. On May 28, 2025, [Bill 30 – Working for Workers Seven Act, 2025](#) – was introduced and subsequently received Royal Assent on November 27, 2025. Bill 30 is an omnibus bill that amends several existing statutes, including the OHSA and WSIA.

### [Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#)

#### **Administrative Penalties**

An administrative penalty framework has been introduced. Where an employer is found to be non-compliant with the Act, a Ministry inspector may issue a notice outlining the nature of the contravention and impose a prescribed financial penalty. Employers retain the right to request a review of the penalty.

## **Health and Safety Management Systems**

Health and safety management systems accredited by the Chief Prevention Officer must be recognized as equivalent during the procurement process. This establishes that systems not directly certified by the Ministry are to be treated equally for the purpose of bidding on Ontario infrastructure projects. These changes reinforce accountability while recognizing accredited prevention systems within organizations.

### ***Amendments to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA)***

#### **Administrative Penalties and Increased Maximum Fines**

Administrative penalties may now be imposed on employers who misrepresent information, falsify records, or evade premium payments. This applies to both Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 employers. The administrative penalty may be issued in addition to court action under Section 152 of the Act.

Significantly, the maximum fine for certain offences has increased. An employer convicted of two or more counts of the same offence in the same legal proceeding may now be liable for up to \$750,000 per conviction (previously \$500,000).

The Act also outlines aggravating factors to be considered in determining penalties, including:

- Previous convictions
- Multiple counts of the same offence in a proceeding
- A documented history of non-compliance with the WSIA

These amendments underscore the importance of transparency, accurate reporting, and robust internal processes — areas in which Occupational Health Nurses often play a critical advisory and oversight role.

#### **➤ *Working for Workers Act, 2023***

#### **Occupational Exposure Registry**

As part of commitments made under the *Working for Workers Act, 2023*, the Government of Ontario announced on February 20, 2026, the launch of Canada's first [Occupational Exposure Registry](#) (OER). The OER is a secure digital portal that enables workers to record and track occupational exposures to designated hazardous substances. Initially, the registry includes eleven (11) substances, such as asbestos, lead, mercury, and silica. Each submission generates a downloadable confirmation email for the worker's records. A key advantage of the OER is its potential to support long-term tracking of occupational exposures, which may assist in future medical assessments should symptoms arise years later. At this time, public communications have focused primarily on the registry's worker-centred benefits, with less emphasis on potential implications for Ministry enforcement activities or WSIB occupational disease claims.

#### **Moving Forward**

These legislative developments highlight the evolving regulatory landscape in which Occupational Health Nurses practice. Your expertise in documentation, prevention strategies, exposure management, and organizational policy will continue to be essential in navigating these changes.

OHNIG remains committed to supporting you through education, dialogue, and shared learning as we adapt to these important updates together.