

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WCB Nova Scotia**

**Workplace injury rate continues to improve**

*Injury prevention and return to work stronger in long-term care and home care*

HALIFAX, NS - Fewer Nova Scotians are getting hurt at work.

The province's injury rate continued its long-term improvement trend reaching an historic low of 1.41 in the first quarter of 2023 compared to 1.54 at the end of 2022. The number measures injuries serious enough to cause the worker to lose time from the job, per 100 workers covered by workers' compensation in our province. There was also encouraging progress in the amount of time lost to workplace injury, with fewer days lost in Q1 compared to the same period last year.

The results were released today in [WCB Nova Scotia's quarterly Report to the Community](#).

Building on the positive momentum achieved last year, both the rate of injury and the time it takes to recover and make a safe return to work improved in Q1 in the long-term care, home care and disability support sectors. The WCB says these are indications that collaborative efforts to improve outcomes through workplace initiatives and investments by Government are paying off. Keeping workers in these sectors healthy, safe, and doing the important work of caring for others has been a major focus for the WCB, working alongside the provincial government, AWARE Nova Scotia and other industry partners for the past few years.

"Although there is still room for improvement, these trends show we're making progress in our key focus areas of injury prevention and safe and timely return to work," says Shelley Rowan, WCB Nova Scotia's Interim CEO. "As we welcome our permanent CEO and launch our new strategic plan next year, the WCB can build on this foundation of progress to support the health and safety of working Nova Scotians and their workplaces into the future." The WCB recently [announced that Karen Adams](#) will take over as the WCB's permanent CEO starting on August 14.

The impact of psychological injury on the province's workplaces continued in Q1 2023, when 40 working Nova Scotians experienced a psychological injury that required time away from work. There were 135 time-loss psychological injuries in all of 2022. At the same time, the WCB's dedicated program to support workers impacted by traumatic psychological injury continued to show progress, assisting workers in recovering from these often challenging, complex injuries.

[The WCB's complete 2022 Annual Report](#) was also released today, although injury and fatality information was released earlier in the year. There were 24 fatalities and 5,420 time-loss injuries in 2022, and 52,000 fewer days were lost to workplace injury last year, the equivalent of about 200 people working full time for the whole year. Nova Scotia is still behind the rest of Canada in how long it takes, on average, for return-to-work outcomes to be achieved.

WCB Nova Scotia's financial position decreased in 2022 due to fluctuations in the global market and continued high claims costs. At the end of 2022 the funded percentage was 92.9 per cent, down from 106.4 per cent in 2021.

Beginning in the first quarter of 2023, the WCB transitioned to the new International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS 17) as required for WCBs across the country. This reporting change affects how the WCB calculates the value of future liabilities, and that resulted in a slight decrease in the reported funded percentage. At the end of Q1 2023 using the new methodology, the WCB's funded percentage was 92.1 per cent. Under the previous methodology, the funded percentage would have been 94 per cent.

"Our finances remain strong," Rowan says. "Like the rest of the world we have navigated turbulent years in the investment markets, but we are confident we have a solid foundation and a strong future on which to build an even better workplace safety and insurance system for Nova Scotians."

### **Q1 2023 Community Report Highlights**

- The injury rate remained high in long-term care, but improved slightly to 4.05, down from 4.09 at the end of 2022. In home care, the rate improved very slightly to 6.83, down slightly from 6.85. Both sectors remain a focus for the WCB and its injury prevention partners.
- Many workers are making a safe return to work after injury. 81 per cent were back at work within 180 days in Q1, a level unchanged since the end of 2022.
- The number of days lost to injury improved, with the number of time-loss days paid improving to 277 per 100 covered workers, down from 292 at the end of 2022.
- The number of COVID-19 claims dropped significantly compared to the same period last year. There were 17 claims, compared to 233 during Q1 2022.

### **2022 Annual Report Highlights**

- The number of covered workplaces grew to 20,600, while the percentage of the workforce that is protected by WCB coverage dropped to 73 per cent.
- There were fewer registered claims in 2022: 20,527 compared to 21,283 in 2021.
- The number of time-loss claims increased to 5,420, up slightly from 5,391 in 2021.
- Assessable payroll increased to \$14 billion, up from \$12.7 billion in 2021.
- The cost of claims increased, rising to \$241 million, up from \$233 million in 2021.
- The WCB's annual [Impact of Injury Report](#) includes more 2022 workplace safety and return-to-work measures.

## **About the WCB**

*The Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB) is committed to keeping Nova Scotians safe and secure from workplace injury. The WCB provides workplace injury insurance for more than 20,000 employers, representing about 350,000 workers across the province. The WCB sets the standard for workplace injury insurance by informing and inspiring Nova Scotians in the prevention of workplace injury. If an injury occurs, we support those whose lives it touches by championing a timely return to safe and healthy work.*

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