

2025

Impact of Workplace Injury Report

Protecting Nova Scotia's workforce from the impact of workplace injury

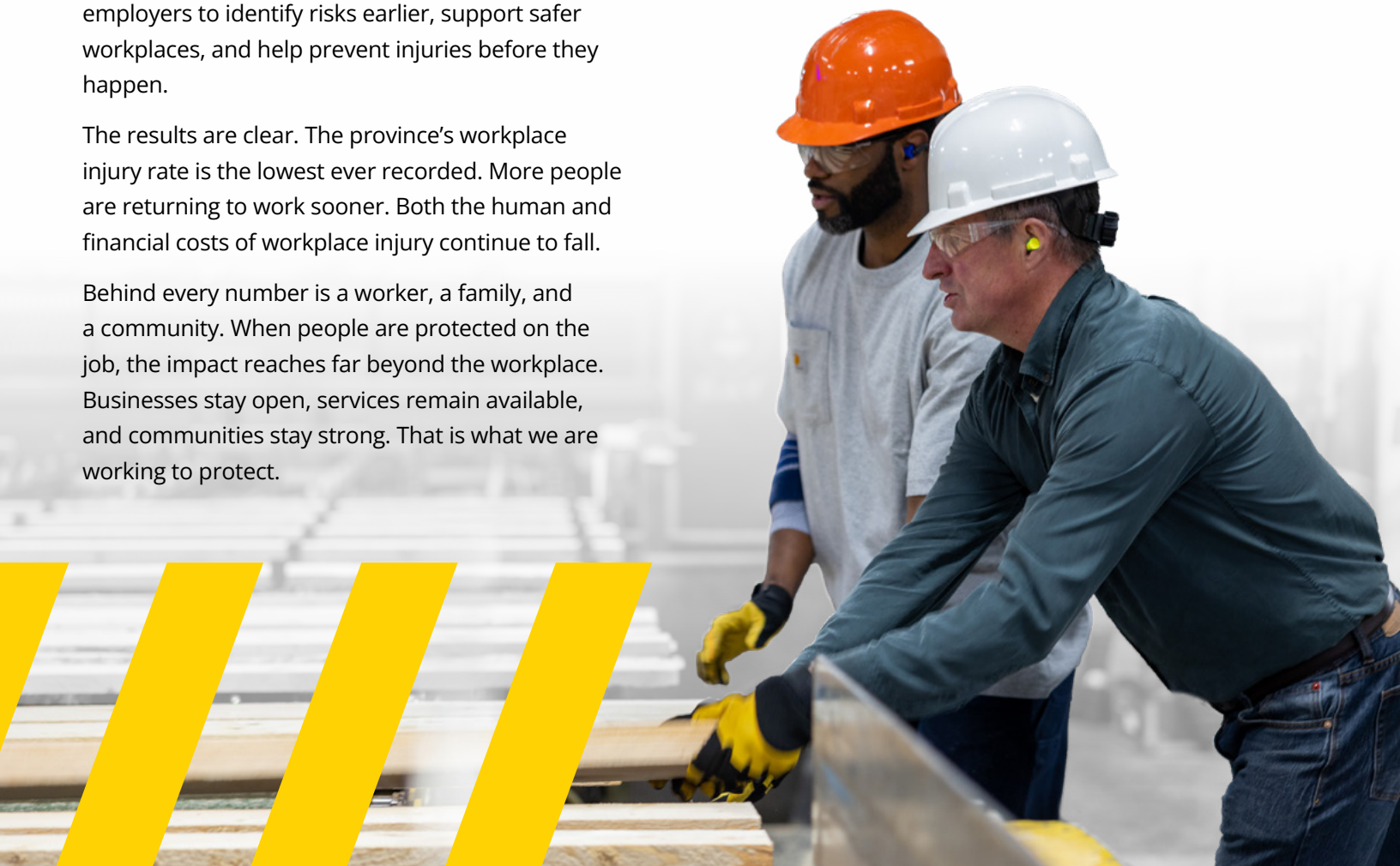
We've changed. Not just in what we do, but in how we do it.

In 2025, we strengthened accountability across the system. Through **Duty to Cooperate**, workers and employers share clearer responsibility for safe, timely return to work. Through **Work-Connected Recovery**, health care providers are playing a more active role in recovery. And we're working more closely with employers to identify risks earlier, support safer workplaces, and help prevent injuries before they happen.

The results are clear. The province's workplace injury rate is the lowest ever recorded. More people are returning to work sooner. Both the human and financial costs of workplace injury continue to fall.

Behind every number is a worker, a family, and a community. When people are protected on the job, the impact reaches far beyond the workplace. Businesses stay open, services remain available, and communities stay strong. That is what we are working to protect.

This report shares the human impact of workplace injury in our province — where and how workplace injury happened, and how we're supporting workers and employers in making safe, healthy work part of recovery wherever possible.



Every worker in Nova Scotia deserves to go home safe

Every worker in Nova Scotia deserves to go home safe. In 2025, 4,834 Nova Scotians had to miss three or more days of work to recover from a workplace injury. That's eight per cent fewer than in 2024, but still too many. For every worker who gets hurt, there's a ripple effect — a shift missed, a family affected, a community that feels it. That's why WCB is committed to protecting people from workplace injury through prevention and keeping people at work, when possible, while they recover.

Total workforce: 523,500
WCB covered workers: 399,466

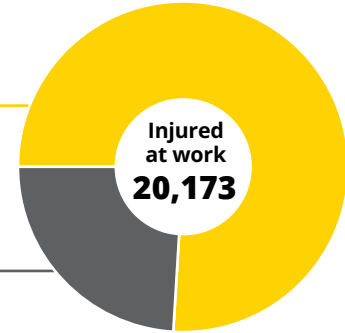
76%

Returned to work with no time loss

15,339

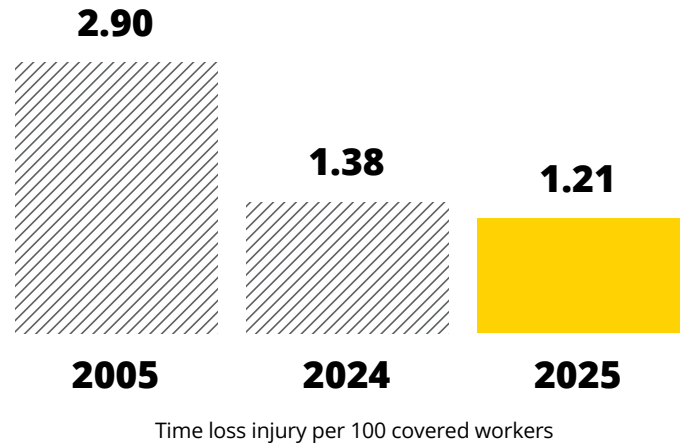
Time-loss claims

4,834



Provincial injury rate at a historic low

The 2025 provincial injury rate is the lowest ever. Last year, 426 fewer Nova Scotians were seriously hurt on the job compared to the year before.

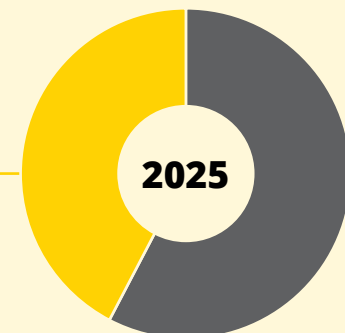


Did you know?

In 2025, 25 employers accounted for about 40 per cent of all time-loss injuries in Nova Scotia. WCB changed its approach with these employers by building stronger relationships, co-creating solutions, and working side by side on prevention and return to work.

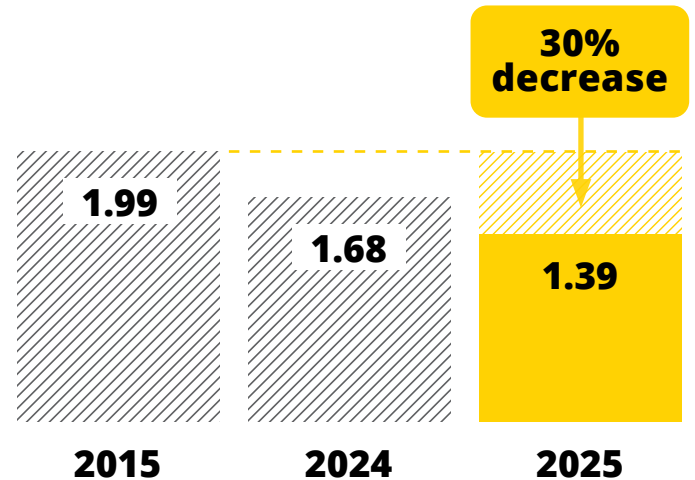
25 Employers

40%
of all time-loss injuries



Injury rate in construction is lowest in a decade

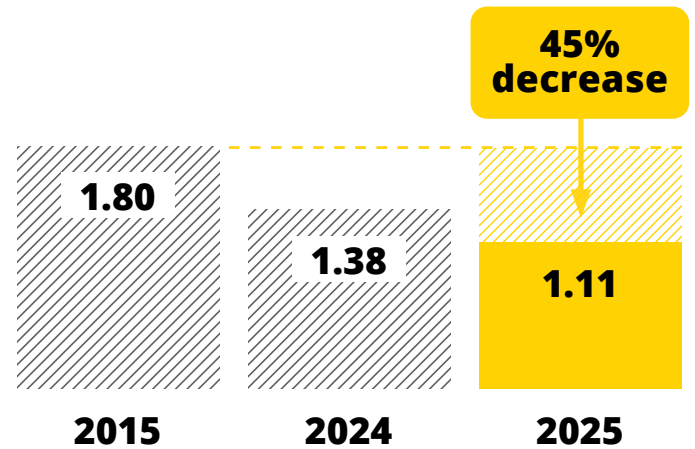
More construction workers are going home safe. **Nova Scotia's construction injury rate has decreased 30 per cent since 2015**, with the most significant improvements occurring in recent years. As demand for construction grows across the province, the sector is also tackling a wider definition of worker well-being, with growing attention to psychological injury and a commitment to workplace culture where every worker feels safe and supported.



Time loss injury per 100 covered workers in the construction sector

A steady decline in manufacturing injuries

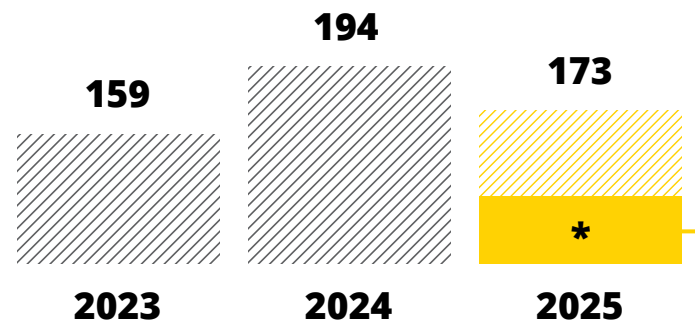
Manufacturing workers are getting hurt less. **Nova Scotia's manufacturing injury rate has decreased 45 per cent over the past decade**, down from 1.38 to 1.11 last year alone. That decline reflects a sector increasingly committed to building safer, healthier workplaces.



Time loss injury per 100 covered workers in the manufacturing sector

Psychology injury: A turning point

Not every workplace injury is visible. Psychological injury claims dropped in 2025 — a shift that may reflect growing awareness of mental health in the workplace and an evolving understanding of psychological workplace injury.

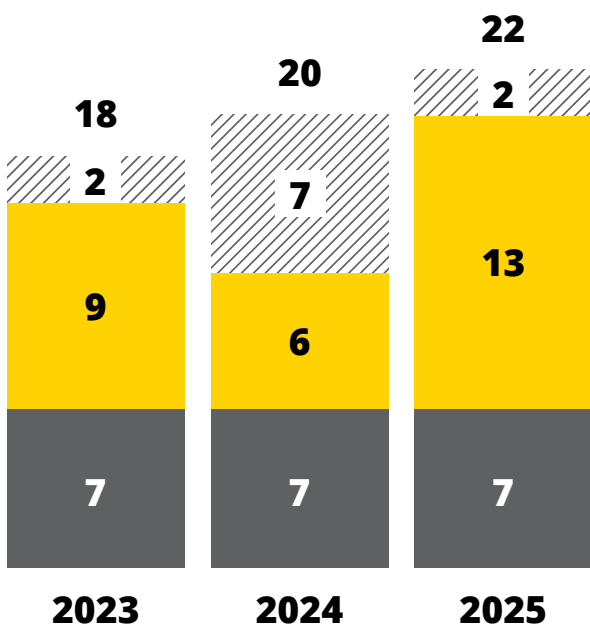


* Nearly half of all psychological injury claims in 2025 came from first responders — **72 out of 173**.

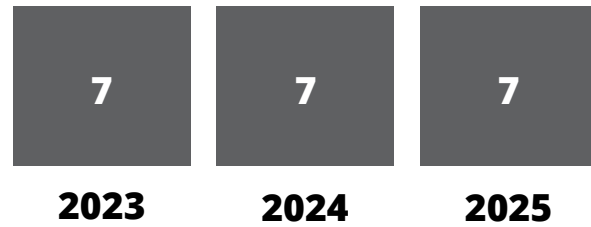
Workplace fatalities

Tragically, in 2025, 22 Nova Scotians lost their lives at work or because of their work.

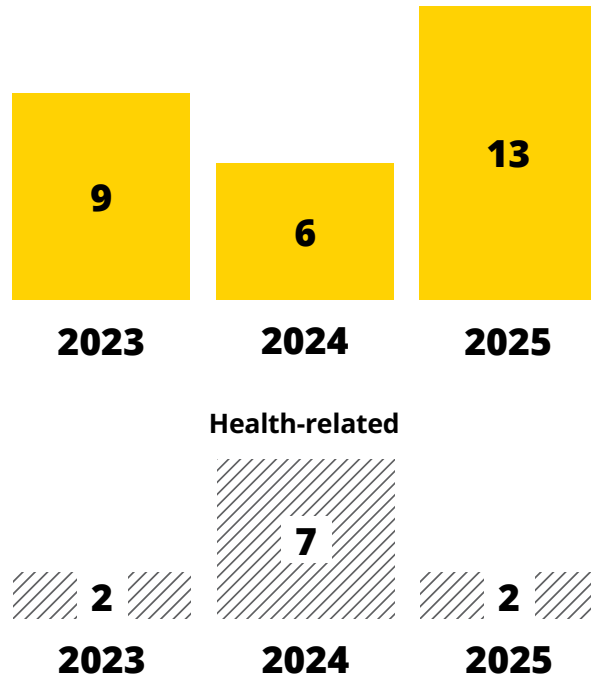
Occupational disease deaths increased compared to 2024. Four of these deaths were due to cancers that became eligible for presumptive coverage for firefighters in 2022, when presumptive coverage expanded from six to 19 types of cancer.



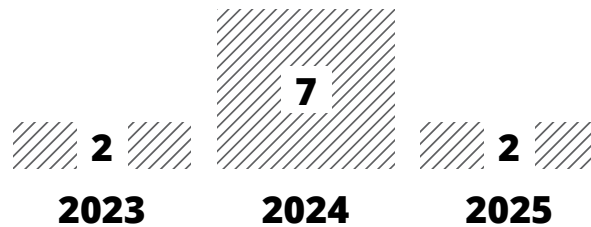
Acute Fatalities



Occupational Diseases



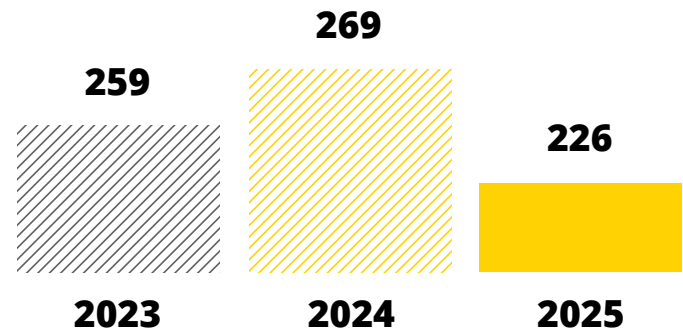
Health-related



83,000 days back into workforce

In 2025, Nova Scotians spent more time on the job instead of being sidelined by workplace injury. **Days lost per 100 covered workers dropped 13 per cent from 2024 — and in real terms, that means 83,000 working days returned to Nova Scotia's labour force.**

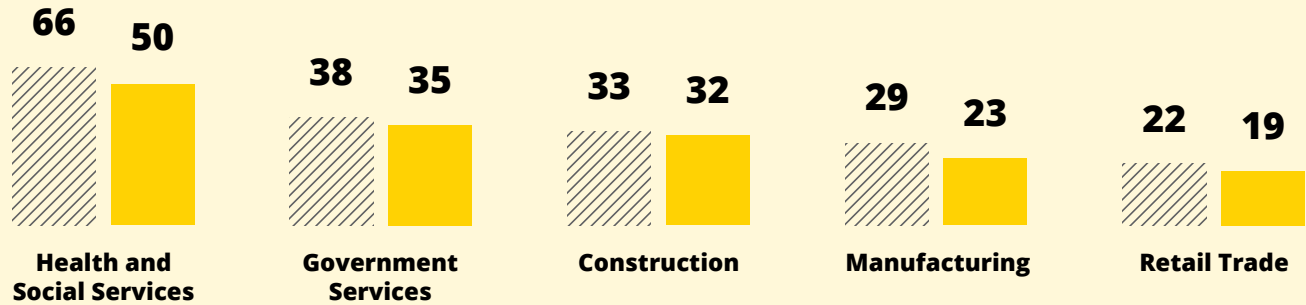
It's the equivalent to more than 300 people working full-time for a year — caring for our most vulnerable, building roads and homes, and keeping businesses running.



Time loss days paid per 100 covered workers

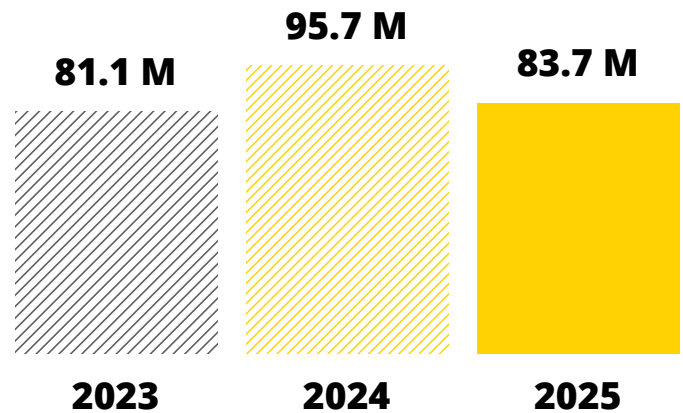
Did you know?

Days lost per 100 covered workers decreased across every major sector in 2025.



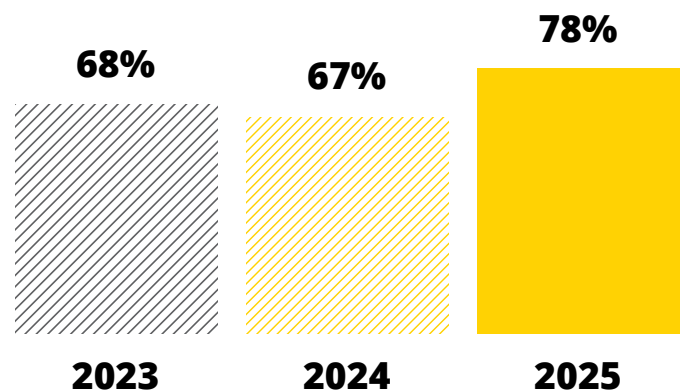
More accountability means less cost to the system

Early contact, a supportive return-to-work team, and greater accountability have enabled more Nova Scotians to recover and return to work safely and sooner. That means fewer appointments, less time away from work, and a system centred around the worker. Shared accountability by WCB, physicians, employers, workers, and health care providers has reduced health care costs and delivered savings back into the compensation system, keeping it strong and stable for workers and employers for years to come. Most importantly, it means Nova Scotians get their lives back, sooner.



More Nova Scotians back to work sooner

Work is more than a paycheque. It's connection, routine, and a sense of purpose. When a workplace injury happens, the impact reaches beyond the physical. Safe and sustainable return-to-work is a key part of recovery, helping injured workers stay connected to their workplace and supporting better outcomes over time. **In 2025, 78 per cent of workers safely returned to work within 90 days.**

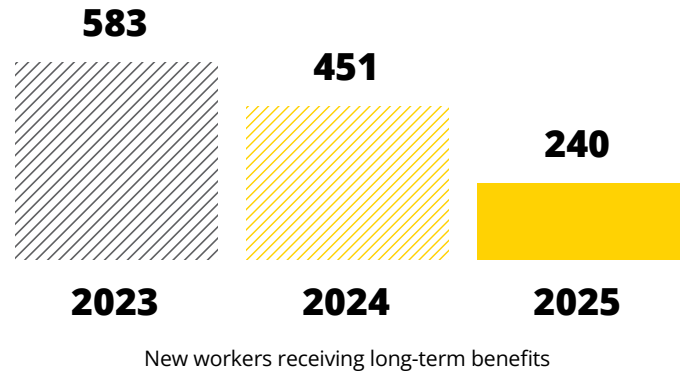


Return to work within 90 days

Fewer workers staying on long-term benefits

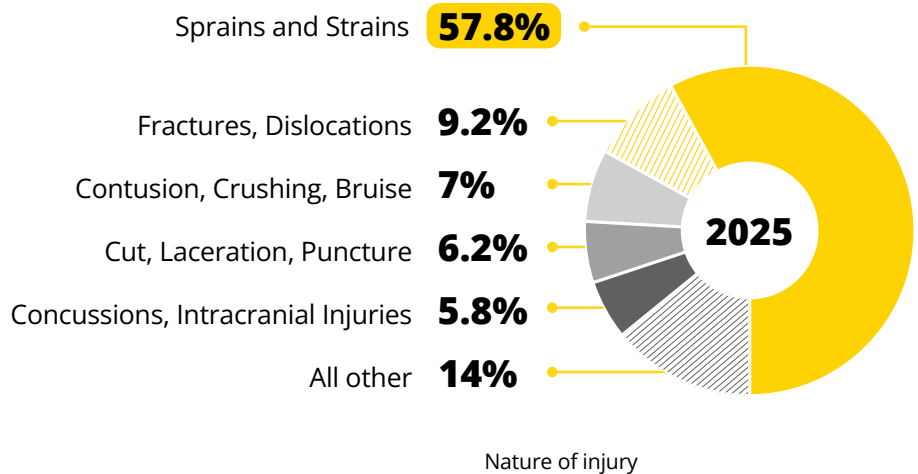
Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates in Canada of workers still receiving benefits two years after their injury. The number of workers staying on long-term benefits continues to decline, dropping significantly over the past few years.

Changing this takes time, but progress is happening.



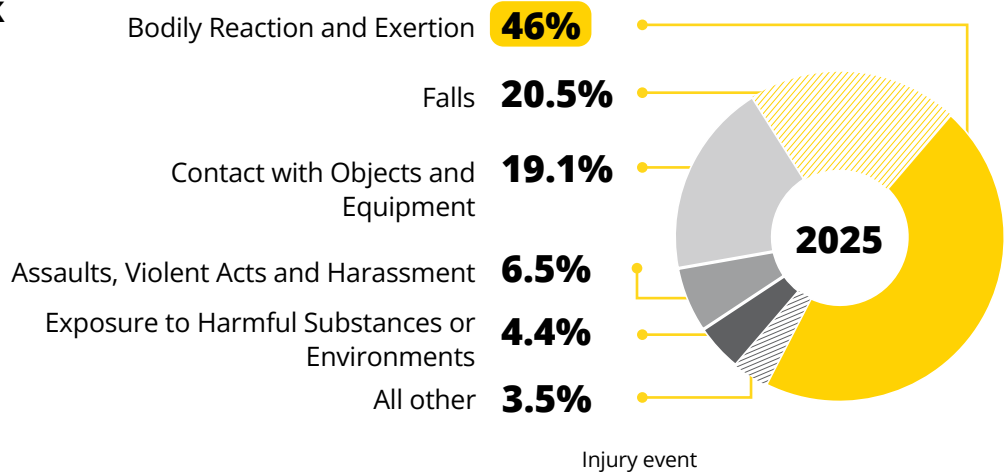
Strains and sprains remain most common injuries

Sprains, strains, and other musculoskeletal injuries remain the most common workplace injury in Nova Scotia, and the first priority of the **Safer Workplaces Together** Action Plan. The goal is to improve across all sectors, reducing how often these injuries happen and how long they keep workers off from the job.



How Nova Scotians are getting injured at work

Moving, lifting, and repetitive movements — leading to sprains and strains — remain the leading cause of workplace injury in Nova Scotia.



Injury Statistics

Injury Rate and Claim Volumes by Industry For Nova Scotia, 2025

	Excluding Self Insured Claims								Including Self Insured Claims			
	Assessable Payroll (\$ millions)	% of Total Assessable Payroll	Number of Claims Registered	% of Claims Registered	Number of Time Loss Claims	% of Time Loss Claims	Injury Rate	Injury Rate Last Year (2024)	Number of Claims Registered	% of Claims Registered	Number of Time Loss Claims	% of Time Loss Claims
Health/Social Services	3,703.2	21.2%	4,389	23.4%	1,276	29.1%	1.80	2.09	4,389	21.8%	1,276	26.4%
Construction	2,285.9	13.1%	2,334	12.4%	555	12.7%	1.39	1.68	2,334	11.6%	555	11.5%
Retail Trade	2,003.9	11.4%	1,868	9.9%	437	10.0%	0.88	1.02	1,940	9.6%	458	9.5%
Manufacturing	1,964.9	11.2%	2,304	12.3%	407	9.3%	1.11	1.38	2,304	11.4%	407	8.4%
Wholesale Trade	1,355.1	7.7%	1,358	7.2%	272	6.2%	1.00	0.98	1,358	6.7%	272	5.6%
Business Services	1,071.5	6.1%	335	1.8%	74	1.7%	0.31	0.29	335	1.7%	74	1.5%
Accommodation/Food/Beverages	995.8	5.7%	1,058	5.6%	273	6.2%	0.90	0.98	1,058	5.2%	273	5.6%
Transportation/Storage	784.6	4.5%	796	4.2%	260	5.9%	1.99	2.17	803	4.0%	261	5.4%
Government Services	701.9	4.0%	652	3.5%	182	4.1%	1.65	1.81	1,817	9.0%	555	11.5%
Communication/Utilities	641.3	3.7%	590	3.1%	132	3.0%	1.09	1.09	707	3.5%	184	3.8%
Educational Services	587.2	3.4%	784	4.2%	253	5.8%	1.82	1.84	784	3.9%	253	5.2%
Other Services	567.1	3.2%	568	3.0%	125	2.8%	0.96	0.93	568	2.8%	125	2.6%
Fishing/Trapping	332.9	1.9%	204	1.1%	55	1.3%	1.06	0.95	204	1.0%	55	1.1%
Real Estate/Insurance Agents	214.6	1.2%	152	0.8%	38	0.9%	0.83	0.60	152	0.8%	38	0.8%
Agriculture/Related Services	114.5	0.7%	108	0.6%	32	0.7%	1.32	1.87	108	0.5%	32	0.7%
Mining/Quarries/Oil Wells	65.1	0.4%	43	0.2%	3	0.1%	0.26	1.65	62	0.3%	3	0.1%
Finance/Insurance	57.8	0.3%	11	0.1%	0	0.0%	0.00	0.00	11	0.1%	0	0.0%
Logging/Forestry	56.5	0.3%	51	0.3%	13	0.3%	1.25	0.93	51	0.3%	13	0.3%
Unknown	0.0	0.0%	1,188	6.3%	0	0.0%	0.00	0.00	1,188	5.9%	0	0.0%
Total	\$17,503.9	100.0%	18,793	100.0%	4,387	100.0%	1.21	1.38	20,173	100.0%	4,834	100.0%

Injury Statistics

Injury Rate

Time Loss Claims per 100 Covered Workers

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1.58	1.54	1.40	1.38	1.21

Age at Injury Date

Compensable time-loss claims

	2024	%	2025	%
Less than 20	120	2.3%	97	2.0%
20 to 24	433	8.2%	439	9.1%
25 to 29	623	11.8%	553	11.4%
30 to 34	584	11.1%	546	11.3%
35 to 39	521	9.9%	552	11.4%
40 to 44	523	9.9%	494	10.2%
45 to 49	561	10.7%	471	9.7%
50 to 54	599	11.4%	534	11.0%
55 to 59	604	11.5%	520	10.8%
60 to 64	449	8.5%	419	8.7%
65 or older	243	4.6%	209	4.3%
Total	5,260	100.0%	4,834	100.0%

Source of Injury

Compensable time-loss claims

	2024	%	2025	%
Persons, Plants, Animals, and Minerals	2,284	43.4%	1,994	41.2%
Structures and Surfaces	801	15.2%	936	19.4%
Containers	394	7.5%	393	8.1%
Parts and Materials	371	7.1%	345	7.1%
Vehicles	326	6.2%	289	6.0%
Tools, Instruments, and Equipment	345	6.6%	280	5.8%
Other Sources	345	6.6%	233	4.8%
Machinery	206	3.9%	178	3.7%
Furniture and Fixtures	154	2.9%	153	3.2%
Chemicals and Chemical Products	34	0.6%	33	0.7%
Total	5,260	100.0%	4,834	100.0%

Injury Event

Compensable time-loss claims

	2024	%	2025	%
Bodily Reaction and Exertion	2,618	49.8%	2,223	46.0%
Falls	965	18.3%	993	20.5%
Contact With Objects and Equipment	983	18.7%	925	19.1%
Assaults, Violent Acts and Harassment	287	5.5%	315	6.5%
Exposure to Harmful Substances or Environments	208	4.0%	215	4.4%
Transportation Accidents	164	3.1%	155	3.2%
Fires and Explosions	4	0.1%	5	0.1%
Other Events or Exposures	31	0.6%	3	0.1%
Total	5,260	100.0%	4,834	100.0%

Injury Statistics

Claims by Firm

Number of Claims Registered	Number of Firms	Cumulative % of Total Number of Firms	Number of New Claims Registered	Cumulative % of Total New Claims Registered	Assessable Payroll (\$ millions)	Cumulative % of Total Assessable Payroll
200 or more	11	0.05%	5,463	27.08%	3,017.8	17.2%
100 or more	19	0.09%	6,598	32.71%	3,959.0	22.6%
50 or more	39	0.19%	7,933	39.32%	4,677.8	26.7%
25 or more	93	0.46%	9,735	48.26%	5,784.1	33.0%
10 or more	287	1.42%	12,644	62.68%	7,629.0	43.6%
5 or more	618	3.06%	14,754	73.14%	9,140.4	52.2%

Nature of Injury

Compensable time-loss claims

	2024	%	2025	%
Sprains, Strains	3,189	60.6%	2,792	57.8%
Fractures, Dislocations	469	8.9%	446	9.2%
Contusion, Crushing, Bruise	368	7.0%	340	7.0%
Cut, Laceration, Puncture	257	4.9%	298	6.2%
Concussions, Intracranial Injuries	309	5.9%	279	5.8%
Other traumatic injuries and disorders	155	2.9%	211	4.4%
Mental Disorders or Syndromes	180	3.4%	161	3.3%
All Other	102	1.9%	120	2.5%
Burns	64	1.2%	83	1.7%
Inflamed Joint, Tendon, Muscle	140	2.7%	69	1.4%
Digestive system diseases and disorders	27	0.5%	35	0.7%
Total	5,260	100%	4,834	100%

Part of Body

Compensable time-loss claims

	2024	%	2025	%
Back, including spine, spinal cord	1,254	23.8%	1,035	21.4%
All Other	585	11.1%	567	11.7%
Multiple body parts	461	8.8%	507	10.5%
Leg(s)	497	9.4%	455	9.4%
Shoulder, including clavicle, scapula and trapezius muscle if shoulder is mentioned	511	9.7%	360	7.4%
Finger(s), fingernail(s)	283	5.4%	317	6.6%
Ankle(s)	265	5.0%	305	6.3%
Cranial region, including skull	279	5.3%	235	4.9%
Arm(s)	252	4.8%	222	4.6%
Body systems	194	3.7%	185	3.8%
Wrist(s)	222	4.2%	184	3.8%
Hand(s), except finger(s)	143	2.7%	138	2.9%
Foot(feet), except toe(s)	137	2.6%	130	2.7%
Face	92	1.7%	98	2.0%
Pelvic region	85	1.6%	96	2.0%
Total	5,260	100%	4,834	100%