October, 2026

THE SUPERHR DIGEST

In this Edition

From the Get-Go: Minimum Wage Changes- October 2026

Compliance Update: A New Avenue for Small Employment-Related Disputes in BC

OH&S Insights: Kitchen Safety

Level Up: Benefits Renewal - Don't Just Renew. Benchmark.

Everyday HR: Short-Term Turnover - The Problem May Have Started Before Day One

Employee Development: A New Focus on Growth

Exciting News: Out & About with SuperHR

FROM THE Get-Go

Minimum Wage Is Changing Is Your Payroll Ready?

October 1 brings another round of minimum wage increases across Canada. Ontario, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan are increasing their general minimum wage rates effective October 1, 2026. Ontario will move from $17.60 to $17.95, Manitoba from $16.00 to $16.40, Nova Scotia from $16.75 to $17.00, PEI from $17.00 to $17.30, and Saskatchewan from $15.35 to $15.70 per hour.

For employers, a minimum wage change is more than a payroll adjustment. **Review your payroll system, employment contracts, job postings, wage grids and compensation structures to ensure the correct rates are being applied.** It is also a good opportunity to review employees who are currently paid only slightly above minimum wage: while the legislation does not automatically require an employer to increase everyone's wages when minimum wage increases, compression can quickly create inconsistencies within a compensation structure.

HR CHECK: It is critical to review your employment contracts, specifically the compensation clauses. If the wage stated in an existing contract is no longer accurate, consider preparing a fresh employment contract or a compensation clause amendment to reflect the new rate and current compensation structure. Keeping employment agreements aligned with actual terms of employment is an important part of maintaining clear, enforceable and up-to-date employment documentation.



COMPLIANCE Update

A New Avenue for Small Employment-Related Disputes in BC

When an employment relationship ends, not every dispute is about Employment Standards Act (ESA) entitlements. What happens when an employee does not return a company laptop, tools, equipment, keys or other property? Or when an employee and employer disagree about a contractual obligation or another financial loss that falls outside the ESA?

For BC employers, the Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) provides an online avenue for resolving many small civil claims. The CRT can deal with claims involving debt, damages, contracts and recovery of personal property, generally up to $5,000. This can be particularly relevant when an employer is seeking recovery for company property that was not returned or other losses arising from a contractual relationship.



What about employees?

The CRT can also provide employees with another avenue for certain employment-related disputes that are outside the exclusive jurisdiction of the Employment Standards Branch (ESB). The ESB remains responsible for ESA entitlements such as wages, overtime, vacation pay, statutory holiday pay and termination-related minimum entitlements. However, the CRT may deal with certain contractual claims, including claims based on the employment contract that are not ESA rights.

Why does this matter?

The CRT is designed to be accessible, affordable, informal and flexible, with an online process that includes negotiation and facilitation before a tribunal member may make a decision. CRT decisions and orders can be enforced through the courts.

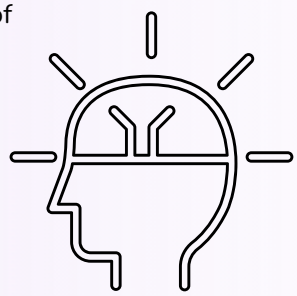
For employers, this reinforces an important HR practice: document company property, contractual obligations and employee responsibilities clearly from the beginning. A well-written employment agreement, property acknowledgment and termination checklist can make it much easier to establish what was expected when a dispute arises.

Before relying on the CRT to recover a loss, employers should:

Document company property: Keep a record of laptops, phones, keys, tools, equipment and other property assigned to each employee.

Document the loss: Keep invoices, replacement costs, correspondence and other evidence showing the financial impact.

Include clear contract language: Employment agreements should clearly address the employee's responsibility to return company property when employment ends.



Give the employee an opportunity to resolve the issue: A written request for the return of property can help establish that the employer attempted to resolve the matter.

Choose the right forum: Determine whether the matter belongs with the Employment Standards Branch, the CRT or the Provincial Court before proceeding.

The best dispute is the one that never happens. Clear contracts, property records and termination checklists can significantly reduce the risk of disputes and make recovery easier when problems occur.

Kitchen Safety:
More Than Just a Clean Kitchen



A busy kitchen is a high-energy workplace. Knives, meat slicers, deep fryers, ovens, hot surfaces, chemicals, wet floors and heat can all create serious workplace hazards when safe practices are overlooked.

The challenge is that many kitchen injuries happen during routine tasks. A rushed employee reaches into a machine, carries a hot tray without the right protection, leaves a spill unattended, uses a knife incorrectly or works through uncomfortable heat without taking appropriate precautions. What feels like a small shortcut can quickly become an injury.



Safety Starts With Everyday Habits

Effective kitchen safety is not simply about having policies on the wall. Workers need to understand why the rules exist, how to recognize hazards and what to do when something is unsafe. That means knowing how to:

- Handle knives and powered equipment safely
- Work safely around deep fryers, ovens, steam and hot surfaces
- Prevent slips, trips and falls
- Recognize and respond to heat stress
- Use PPE appropriately
- Handle cleaning chemicals safely
- Report hazards, near misses and unsafe equipment
- Respond appropriately when an incident occurs

Equip Your Team Before Something Goes Wrong

This is why we created our Kitchen Safety OHS Self-Paced Training Program. The program turns common kitchen hazards into practical, easy-to-understand learning. Through short visual modules, employees learn to recognize risks, follow safer work practices and make better safety decisions during their everyday work. The training is designed to complement your workplace's existing safety procedures and OHS program, not replace them.

A Safer Kitchen Is a Team Effort

Safety is not just the responsibility of the manager, chef or safety representative. Every person working in the kitchen has a role in identifying hazards, following procedures and speaking up when something does not look right.



Train your team before an incident teaches the lesson for you. Kitchen Safety Training is now available through SuperHR Academy.

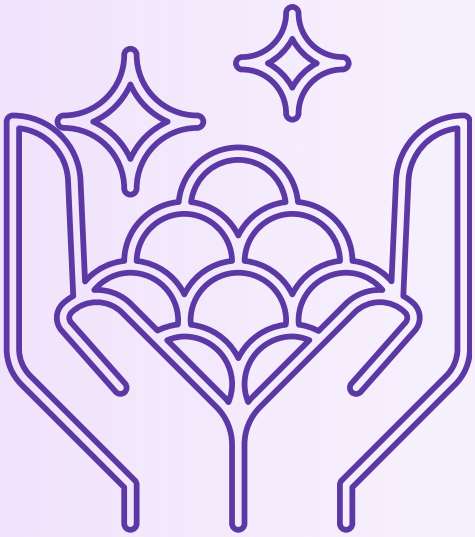
Benefits Renewal: Don't Just Renew, Benchmark.

Your annual benefits renewal is more than a conversation about premiums. It is an opportunity to ask a more strategic question: “Is our benefits program still competitive for the people we want to attract and retain?”

The benefits market is evolving. Traditional Extended Health, Prescription Drugs and Dental remain the foundation, but comparable employers are increasingly adding mental-health support, virtual healthcare, Health Care Spending Accounts, wellness programs, retirement savings contributions and other flexible benefits.

For employers competing for the same talent, the question is “How does our benefits plan compare?”

What Are Comparable Employers Offering? A review of employers in the distribution, foodservice, packaging and business-supply sectors shows a fairly consistent core - Extended Health, Prescription Drugs, Dental, Vision, Paramedical, Life & AD&D, Disability, EAP.



More comprehensive programs are increasingly incorporating:

- Mental-health and counselling coverage
- Virtual healthcare
- Health Care Spending Accounts
- Wellness spending accounts
- Enhanced paramedical maximums
- RRSP or pension contributions
- Professional development support
- Employee wellness programs
- Family and financial wellness benefits

This means employers should understand where the market is moving before deciding what their own employees need.

What Do Employees Actually Value?

Employee research consistently puts health and dental coverage near the top of the benefits list. But there is another important trend: choice matters. Employees don't necessarily value every benefit equally. A young employee may place greater value on mental-health support or paramedical coverage, while an employee with a family may place greater value on prescription drugs, dental, vision or family-related coverage.

This is one reason flexible benefits and Health Care Spending Accounts are becoming increasingly interesting. They allow employees to direct some benefit dollars toward their individual needs rather than providing exactly the same value to everyone.



LEVEL UP

The Takeaway
A longer benefits list does not automatically mean a better benefits program. Relevance and flexibility matter.

Don't Forget the Provider Experience

There is another part of the equation that employers sometimes overlook – What happens when an employee actually needs to use the benefit?

A benefits plan can look excellent on paper and still create frustration if employees encounter:

- Difficult claims processes
- Slow reimbursement
- Poor digital tools
- Confusing coverage decisions
- Long customer-service wait times
- Difficulty reaching a real person
- Inconsistent answers

When evaluating a renewal, consider the employee experience with the provider, not just the premium and coverage schedule.

A provider should be evaluated on both what it covers and how it delivers it.

THE LEVEL UP APPROACH

Before accepting a benefits renewal, ask three questions:

1. What are comparable employers offering?
Benchmark your plan against the organizations competing for your talent.

2. What do our employees actually value?
Use employee feedback, utilization data and workforce demographics to understand where benefit dollars have the greatest impact.

3. What can we sustainably offer?
Balance competitiveness with affordability and long-term plan sustainability.

THE BOTTOM LINE - Benefits renewal should not be a "renew or cancel" decision.

It should be a market benchmarking exercise, an employee experience exercise and an HR compliance exercise. The goal is to have a benefits program that is:



Competitive enough to attract talent.

Relevant enough to be valued.

Sustainable enough to maintain.

And properly implemented from an HR perspective.

That's how you LEVEL UP your benefits strategy.

Everyday HR

Short-Term Turnover: The Problem May Have Started Before Day One

An employee is hired. Everyone is excited. The offer is accepted, the first day arrives, introductions are made, and then, a few weeks later, the employee resigns. Sometimes it happens again. And again.

The usual reaction is to blame the employee: “They were not a good fit.” Sometimes that is true. But when an organization experiences repeated short-term turnover, it is worth looking at the other side of the equation. The problem may not be that the organization cannot retain people. It may be that the organization is not setting people up to succeed in the first place.



Recruitment is more than finding someone who can perform a job. It is the beginning of an employment relationship. During the recruitment process, candidates are forming an impression of the organization while the organization is forming an impression of the candidate.

What happens next matters. If the job was not clearly explained, the employment terms are vague, expectations are assumed rather than documented, or the employee arrives without a structured onboarding process, the relationship can quickly develop an expectation gap.

What Did We Actually Hire Them For?

One of the simplest, and most frequently overlooked, HR tools is the job description.

Some organizations operate without current job descriptions. Employees are hired based on a conversation, a few responsibilities listed in a job posting, or simply “we need someone to help us with this.” As the business changes, additional responsibilities are gradually added. Six months later, the employee may be performing a completely different job from the one they thought they accepted.

That creates frustration on both sides. The employer may be thinking: “Why aren't they doing this? We need someone who takes initiative.” The employee may be thinking: “Nobody told me this was part of my job.”

Neither party necessarily has bad intentions. The problem is that expectations were never properly established.

A good job description does not need to describe every task an employee will ever perform. It should provide a clear framework: the purpose of the role, key responsibilities, reporting relationship, required qualifications and the capabilities expected from the person performing the job. It gives both parties a common starting point.



Everyday HR

Then Comes Onboarding - Getting someone through the door is not the same as bringing them into the organization.

A strong onboarding process should answer questions that go far beyond “Where is my workstation?” Employees need to understand who we are, what we do, how we operate, what we expect and how their role contributes to the bigger picture. This is also where organizations begin creating a sense of belonging.

Employees who understand the organization's purpose and see how their work contributes to it have a much stronger foundation for becoming part of the team. Introducing the culture, values, people, policies, communication practices and performance expectations is not administrative housekeeping. It is part of the employee experience. And onboarding should not be reduced to the first morning.

The first few weeks are an opportunity to confirm that the employee understands the role, has the tools and training required, knows where to go for help and is receiving appropriate feedback. A simple 30-, 60- or 90-day structure can help managers identify problems early—before a new employee decides that the organization is not what they expected.

The Recruitment Reality Check

Short-term turnover can have many causes: compensation, management, workplace culture, poor selection, unrealistic expectations, inadequate training or personal circumstances. There is no single explanation. But if an organization repeatedly loses employees within the first few months, it should ask a different question: “What are we doing before and during the first few months of employment that could be contributing to this?”

Review the recruitment process. Review the job description. Review the employment agreement. Review the onboarding experience. Ask new employees what they expected when they accepted the job and whether reality matched those expectations. Sometimes the solution is not another recruitment campaign.

Sometimes the solution is fixing the experience that happens after the recruitment campaign succeeds.

HR CHECK - Before hiring your next employee, make sure you can answer these four questions:

1. What exactly are we hiring this person to do? Is there a current job description that reflects the real role?

2. What exactly are we promising? Are the employment terms, compensation, hours, responsibilities and expectations properly documented?

3. What will the employee experience on Day One? Do we have a structured onboarding process, or are we simply handing them a laptop and showing them where to sit?

4. How will we create belonging? Have we explained our organization, our culture, our purpose and how the employee's role contributes?

Because when short-term turnover keeps happening, the question may not be “Why can't we keep our employees?” The better question may be: “Did we give them a reason—and the tools—to stay?”

Employee Development

A New Focus on Growth

We're excited to introduce a new section in our newsletter dedicated to Employee Development, because strong organizations are built on continuous learning. Each month, we will highlight practical training opportunities available to your team, including a featured course, Info-Sessions and a micro-learning video designed to reinforce key workplace skills in a simple and engaging way. Our goal is to make development accessible, relevant, and easy to implement, supporting both compliance and long-term team success.

SuperHR Academy

Building Better Workplaces

Strong workplace cultures don't happen by accident, they are built through continuous learning and development. Organizations that invest in employee training see stronger leadership, better communication, increased engagement.
This month, we're pleased to introduce a number of SuperHR Academy courses. A full OH&S section is now available, and a set of training programs for Managers and Employees are also available. Remember, success if build on a daily basis, and training is a key element of success.



- **Housekeeping Safety**
- **Storage Safety**
- **Ladder Safety**
- **Fire Safety**



- **Time Theft Prevention**
- **Dealing with Difficult Conversations**
- **Succession Plan**
- **Professionalism**

Micro-learning Video of the Month



Our October Microlearning Video, **Be the Coworker You'd Like to Have,** focuses on the everyday behaviours that help create a positive and productive workplace. Simple actions, greeting others, showing kindness, lending a hand, apologizing when needed, respecting shared spaces, and asking questions when in doubt - can have a meaningful impact on workplace culture. Great workplaces are built one interaction at a time, and every employee has a role to play. We encourage you to watch the short video and share it with your team through email, Teams, WhatsApp, bulletin boards, or during team meetings

Food for Thought

Training is not an expense. It is how you turn potential into performance. You can hire someone who already knows exactly what to do, but you will usually pay a premium for that experience. Or, you can hire for potential and invest in developing the skills, knowledge and abilities your business needs.

Training creates consistency, builds confidence, reduces mistakes, strengthens employee engagement and gives people a clear path to improve. The question is not whether you can afford to train your employees. The better question is: can you afford the cost of not developing them?



Exciting NEWS!

Out & About with SuperHR













1: and 2. Ridge Meadows Chamber - Annual Golf Tournament
3: Greater Langley Chamber - Business After Hours

4: Fraser Valley Executives - Launch Event
5: Annual Able-BC Members Event
6: Greatere Langley Chamber - AGM