



WSIB Policy Agenda 2021

January 2021

Overview

The WSIB's *Framework for Operational Policy Development and Renewal* (Framework) describes the WSIB's commitment to ensure its Operational Policy Manual (OPM) documents are up-to-date, clear, and provide appropriate guidance to staff and the public regarding their application.

The WSIB Policy Agenda describes the policy items that the WSIB plans to focus on in the upcoming year. As outlined in the Framework, the main purpose of the Policy Agenda is to identify and provide to stakeholders advance notice of anticipated substantive items that may involve consultation. In line with the WSIB's commitment to open communication and service excellence, the Policy Agenda may also identify items that may not necessarily involve stakeholder consultation. Policies scheduled for review are also included and may be evaluated independently or, where appropriate, as part of a larger program review.

While not included on the Policy Agenda, each year a number of policies may be identified for "housekeeping"¹ revisions to ensure policies are kept up-to-date. Unanticipated policy items may also need to be addressed as they arise throughout the year.

The WSIB posts all policy changes to its [Policy updates/clarifications page](#).

The following factors are key drivers of the Policy Agenda in 2021:

- As the WSIB moves forward with its *2019-2021 Strategic Plan*, in particular activities to better meet customer needs and expectations, it will rely on the WSIB's policy area for advice and support.
- A number of projects from prior years are ongoing and continue to require policy leadership, advice, and support.
- As science and medicine evolve, the WSIB looks for new information that may help with evidence-based decision-making. The WSIB's policy area will be involved as appropriate where the WSIB commissions studies/reviews.
- Both the WSIB and its stakeholders have finite capacity and resources to participate in policy projects.

¹ "Housekeeping" means non-substantive changes, such as

- consequential revisions resulting from legislative/regulatory amendments or changes made to other policies
- correction of outdated or inaccurate information/terminology
- correction of typographical or grammatical errors, and/or
- updates to legislative references and others.

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Throughout 2020 the WSIB's policy area provided advice and support pertaining to the **Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** with respect to impacts on the management of business accounts, and claim related decision-making which included initial entitlement, benefit payments and return to work. The policy area's ongoing support and engagement in this work will continue into 2021.

The WSIB successfully completed and published the core policies and housekeeping policy revisions with respect to **Rate Framework Modernization**. In 2021, the policy area will continue to provide ongoing operational implementation support and advice for this program.

The policy revisions arising out of the **Return-to-Work** policy review were published in 2020. Ongoing implementation advice and support with respect to the revisions will carry over into 2021.

In collaboration with WSIB operating areas and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the policy area will develop an **Occupational Disease Strategy**. This work is in response to the results from the 2019 Value for Money Audit on the Occupational Disease and Survivor Benefits Program and Dr. Paul Demers' Review on Occupational Cancer.

In 2021, the WSIB's policy area will provide support to the WSIB's response to recommendations from the **Value for Money Audit on the Serious Injury Program**.

The WSIB will be reviewing and analyzing the recommendations from the **Ontario Government's Operational Review of the WSIB** and the policy area will be supporting any resulting changes.

In 2021, the WSIB's policy area will continue to provide advice and support regarding the transformational work underway at the WSIB related to **Core Services Modernization and Payment**.

In 2019, the WSIB released its first **Medical Cannabis** policy. As a new policy, it is subject to a two year review cycle and is due for review in 2021. In addition, the WSIB has committed to stay up-to-date on the scientific and clinical evidence informing the policy's work-related medical conditions, and began its first review of the scientific and clinical evidence in 2020. The outcome of the scientific update will inform the policy review.

The policy area will also commence the review of the following additional **policies scheduled for cyclical review in 2021**:

- 12-01-05, Schedule 2 Security Requirement
- 12-01-06, Expanded Compulsory Coverage in Construction
- 18-02-05, Determining Average Earnings – Concurrent Employment
- 18-02-09, Determining Average Earnings – Periodic Payments for Survivors

In addition to the aforementioned items, the WSIB will maintain **policy capacity to support any potential legislative changes**.