



What's New in HR Law

British Columbia Introduces Bill to Recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a Public Holiday

February 13, 2023 | By [Stephanie Nicholson](#)

Bottom Line

On February 7, 2023, [Bill 2, the *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Act*](#), was introduced at first reading before the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. If passed into law, Bill 2 would recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a public holiday and will establish September 30 as a statutory holiday under British Columbia's *Employment Standards Act*.

Bill 2 and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was established by the Government of Canada in 2021 to commemorate the history and legacy of the Canadian residential school system, which forcibly separated Indigenous children from their families and communities for more than a century. Observed on September 30 each year, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation honours the survivors of residential schools and the children who never returned home, and acknowledges the lasting impact that the residential school system has had on Indigenous families and communities.

Currently, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is recognized as a statutory holiday by the Federal Government and in Prince Edward Island, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon.

This article is for the purposes of only general information and does not constitute legal advice or opinion.

If Bill 2 receives Royal Assent, British Columbia will join the list of Canadian jurisdictions that recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a statutory holiday. To effect this change, Bill 2 will enact the *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Act* and make corresponding amendments to the definitions of “holiday” under British Columbia’s *Election Act*, *Employment Standards Act*, and *Interpretation Act*.

Check the Box

If Bill 2 passes into law, provincially regulated employees in British Columbia will be entitled to observe September 30 as a paid holiday from work or, if they are scheduled to work, to receive premium pay for the hours they work on September 30. As Bill 2 moves through the legislative process, employers will want to be prepared for any changes to their existing workplace policies, as well as consider how Bill 2’s enactment may impact their business and the operation of any relevant collective agreements.

Need More Information?

For more information about British Columbia’s Bill 2 or questions regarding public holiday entitlements, contact [Stephanie Nicholson](#) at 647-598-0515 or your regular lawyer at the firm.



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