

# Administrative Penalties

WorkSafeBC is committed to preventing workplace injury, disease and death. To help achieve this, WorkSafeBC has the legislative authority to levy financial penalties against employers for occupational health and safety (OHS) violations.

Administrative penalties are considered in cases where there has been an OHS violation that created a high risk of injury, and where an employer is found to be in repeat non-compliance with the *Workers Compensation Act* or Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

The primary purpose of an administrative penalty is to motivate the employer receiving the penalty — and other employers — to comply with occupational health and safety legislation and regulation, and to keep their workplaces safe. Penalties are published on the [WorkSafeBC website](#) and in [WorkSafe Magazine](#).

## Penalty Amounts

WorkSafeBC's policy is designed to ensure that employers of similar size generally receive similar penalty amounts in similar cases.

The amount of a penalty is usually based on the size of the employer's payroll, and the nature of the violation. Penalties can be larger if certain specific factors are present, such as for high-risk or intentional circumstances, or if the employer has received a penalty for a substantially similar violation in the past three years.

WorkSafeBC implemented policy changes in 2016 to the way it calculates penalties. The changes reflect recommendations from a 2014 report by Gordon Macatee. Prior to these changes, the statutory maximum penalty was \$75,000.

The statutory maximum penalty amount in 2025 is \$798,867.87. This maximum is set out in legislation and is adjusted in January each year.

## Review Process

If an employer, worker, union or other directly affected party disagrees with a WorkSafeBC decision on administrative penalties, it can request a review of the decision within 45 days after the decision was made. Reviews are conducted by the Review Division of WorkSafeBC.

Review Division decisions on administrative penalties can also be appealed. Appeals are conducted by the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal (WCAT), an independent organization. Review Division decisions must be appealed to WCAT within 30 days.

## Key Facts

- In 2024, WorkSafeBC imposed 361 administrative penalties (net) totalling \$7.6 million.
- To date, the largest single fine — imposed in April 2014 — is \$1,011,639.62. This comprised an administrative penalty of \$97,500 plus a claims cost levy<sup>1</sup> of \$914,139.62.
- [Section 95](#) and [Policy Item P2-95-1](#) explain when WorkSafeBC can impose a penalty, and [Policy Item P2-95-5](#) sets out how penalty amounts are calculated. A penalty must not be imposed if the employer establishes that it exercised [due diligence](#) — in other words, that it took all reasonable care to prevent the failure, violation, or conditions to which the penalty relates.

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<sup>1</sup> Claims Cost Levy: The *Workers Compensation Act* authorizes WorkSafeBC to collect all or part of the compensation payable for an injury or death if the Board considers this was due substantially to: (i) the gross negligence of an employer; (ii) the failure to adopt reasonable means for the prevention of injuries, deaths or occupational diseases; or (iii) the failure of an employer to comply with orders or directions of the Board, or with regulations.