

# Labour Day Reality Check

- In 2016 government sector employees were absent 65% more often than private sector employees due to illness or disability. The Canadian average for the government sector is 11.2 days per employee, and the private sector average is 6.8. That is 4.4 more days absent for government employees.<sup>1</sup>
  - Counting days absent for “Personal or family responsibilities” the difference increases to 5.2 days.<sup>2</sup>
- Days lost also varies substantially by province and level of government.
  - Quebec has the highest number of days absent per government employee with 14.4 days absent due to illness or disability. Alberta has the lowest at 8.5 days per employee.<sup>3</sup>
  - Quebec has the biggest difference between the government sector and the private sector. The government sector has 14.4 lost days per employee due to illness or disability, while in the private sector its 9.1 days. That is a difference of 5.3 days.<sup>4</sup>
    - Newfoundland and Labrador has the biggest percent difference. Government sector employees have 72% more lost days due to illness or disability.
  - Federal administration employees average 12.9 total days absent year due to illness or disability, while provincial administration employees average 11.7 and local administrations average 8.9.<sup>5</sup>
    - British Columbia employees working in federal administration have 17.9 days of absent per employee for illness or disability. Quebec provincial administration employees have 18.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2015 public sector employees lost an average of 10.8 days due to illness and disability, that increased by 0.7 days in 2016, up to 11.2.<sup>7</sup>
  - Provincial administration days absent increased more rapidly, from 9.8 to 11.7, a 19% increase in one year.
- Since 2013 the number of sick days used per worker in the public sector has risen from 10.5 to 11.2 in 2016.<sup>8</sup>
  - Provincial administration sick days have increased more from 10.2 to 11.7 days per worker.
- Summary tables for each province are also available: [British Columbia](#), [Alberta](#), [Saskatchewan](#), [Manitoba](#), [Ontario](#), [Quebec](#), [New Brunswick](#), [Nova Scotia](#), [Prince Edward Island](#), and [Newfoundland and Labrador](#).
- All data is from Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey custom tabulations. For more detail on the data and category definitions see [the methodology section](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Table: Government and Private Sector Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<sup>2</sup> Table: Government and Private Sector Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016

<sup>3</sup> Table: Government and Private Sector Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<sup>4</sup> Table: Government and Private Sector Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<sup>5</sup> Table: Government Administration Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016

<sup>6</sup> Table: Government Administration Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<sup>7</sup> Table: Days Lost Per Worker From 2013 to 2016

<sup>8</sup> Table: Days Lost Per Worker From 2013 to 2016

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Government and Private Sector Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<b>Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability</b>				
<b>Province</b>	<b>Government Sector</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Difference in Days</b>	<b>Percent Difference</b>
<b>British Columbia</b>	11.1	6.8	4.3	63%
<b>Alberta</b>	8.5	5.1	3.4	67%
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	11.7	7.0	4.7	67%
<b>Manitoba</b>	11.4	6.9	4.5	65%
<b>Ontario</b>	9.8	5.9	3.9	66%
<b>Quebec</b>	14.4	9.1	5.3	58%
<b>New Brunswick</b>	12.6	7.4	5.2	70%
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	11.8	7.5	4.3	57%
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	10.0	8.0	2	25%
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	11.2	6.5	4.7	72%
<b>Canada</b>	11.2	6.8	4.4	65%

## Government and Private Sector Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016

Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016				
Province	Government Sector	Private Sector	Difference in Days	Percent Difference
British Columbia	13.0	8.4	4.6	55%
Alberta	10.9	6.6	4.3	65%
Saskatchewan	14.8	8.8	6	68%
Manitoba	14.3	8.8	5.5	63%
Ontario	11.9	7.5	4.4	59%
Quebec	16.7	10.4	6.3	61%
New Brunswick	15.0	8.9	6.1	69%
Nova Scotia	14.2	9.1	5.1	56%
Prince Edward Island	12.9	9.4	3.5	37%
Newfoundland and Labrador	14.2	8.0	6.2	78%
Canada	13.5	8.3	5.2	63%

Includes days lost for 'illness or disability' and 'personal or family responsibilities.'

Government Administration Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability

<b>Days Lost Per Worker in 2016 Due to Illness or Disability</b>			
<b>Province</b>	<b>Federal Administration</b>	<b>Provincial Administration</b>	<b>Local and Other Administration</b>
<b>British Columbia</b>	17.9	11.4	7.9
<b>Alberta</b>	-	7.8	6.9
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	14.6	12.2	-
<b>Manitoba</b>	15.3	14.4	-
<b>Ontario</b>	11.5	7.6	9.6
<b>Quebec</b>	14.4	18.0	9.2
<b>New Brunswick</b>	14	10.3	-
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	14.3	7.4	-
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	7.4	-	-
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	-	9.6	-
<b>Canada</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>8.9</b>

## Government Administration Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker in 2016</b>			
<b>Province</b>	<b>Federal Administration</b>	<b>Provincial Administration</b>	<b>Local and Other Administration</b>
<b>British Columbia</b>	20.1	13.9	10.2
<b>Alberta</b>	10.5	9.8	7.7
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	20.3	14.6	9.1
<b>Manitoba</b>	20.3	17.4	9
<b>Ontario</b>	14.4	9	11.7
<b>Quebec</b>	16.8	20.5	11.8
<b>New Brunswick</b>	15.4	12	-
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	16.9	9	12.2
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	10.9	-	-
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	13.5	11.1	-
<b>Canada</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>10.8</b>

Includes days lost for 'illness or disability' and 'personal or family responsibilities.'

Days Lost Per Worker From 2013 to 2016

<b>Canada</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.5	10.6	10.8	11.2
<b>Federal administration</b>	12	10.5	11.9	12.9
<b>Provincial administration</b>	10.2	9.8	9.8	11.7
<b>Local and other administration</b>	8.5	9.6	10.1	8.9
<b>Private sector</b>	6.5	6.4	6.3	6.8

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	12.4	12.5	12.7	13.5
<b>Federal administration</b>	15.6	13.8	14.4	15.8
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11.6	11.4	11.7	13.8
<b>Local and other administration</b>	9.8	11.1	11.8	10.8
<b>Private sector</b>	8	7.8	7.8	8.3

British Columbia

<b>British Columbia</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	12	10	11	11.1
<b>Federal administration</b>	18.8	12.3	14.6	17.9
<b>Provincial administration</b>	9.2	8.2	9.7	11.4
<b>Local and other administration</b>	9.5	10.4	8.8	7.9
<b>Private sector</b>	7.9	6.1	6.6	6.8

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	13.5	12.7	12.4	13
<b>Federal administration</b>	21.1	17.7	16.7	20.1
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11	9.4	11.5	13.9
<b>Local and other administration</b>	10.1	14.3	10.3	10.2
<b>Private sector</b>	9.6	7.6	8	8.4



Alberta

<b>Alberta</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	8.6	9.2	8.5	8.5
<b>Federal administration</b>	9	-	-	-
<b>Provincial administration</b>	8.5	11.3	9.9	7.8
<b>Local and other administration</b>	8.2	13.2	6	6.9
<b>Private sector</b>	5.4	5.4	4.7	5.1

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.6	11.1	10.7	10.9
<b>Federal administration</b>	11	17.2	10.5	10.5
<b>Provincial administration</b>	9.7	13.6	12.5	9.8
<b>Local and other administration</b>	9.6	13.9	8.4	7.7
<b>Private sector</b>	7.1	6.8	6.2	6.6

Saskatchewan

<b>Saskatchewan</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.6	10.5	10.1	11.7
<b>Federal administration</b>	12.3	10.7	7.5	14.6
<b>Provincial administration</b>	8.6	8.2	10.9	12.2
<b>Local and other administration</b>	7.8	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7.4	6.2	7.1	7

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	12.8	12.5	12.9	14.8
<b>Federal administration</b>	15.4	12.6	9.6	20.3
<b>Provincial administration</b>	10.7	11.4	13.5	14.6
<b>Local and other administration</b>	9.8	6.7	7.9	9.1
<b>Private sector</b>	9.3	8.1	9	8.8

Manitoba

<b>Manitoba</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.7	10.5	9.2	11.4
<b>Federal administration</b>	11.6	10.4	12.4	15.3
<b>Provincial administration</b>	9.8	13.2	13.7	14.4
<b>Local and other administration</b>	15.5	-	7.5	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7.1	7	6.9	6.9

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	13.1	12.1	11.5	14.3
<b>Federal administration</b>	15.9	11.9	14.6	20.3
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11.2	14.5	15.7	17.4
<b>Local and other administration</b>	16.7	7.1	10	9
<b>Private sector</b>	9	8.7	8.6	8.8

Ontario

<b>Ontario</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	8.9	9.1	9.1	9.8
<b>Federal administration</b>	10.5	8	10.6	11.5
<b>Provincial administration</b>	10.3	10.2	7.3	7.6
<b>Local and other administration</b>	5.3	7.6	9.7	9.6
<b>Private sector</b>	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.9

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.9	11.1	10.9	11.9
<b>Federal administration</b>	14.8	11.4	12.8	14.4
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11.4	11	8.4	9
<b>Local and other administration</b>	6.8	9.2	11	11.7
<b>Private sector</b>	7.1	6.8	6.8	7.5

Quebec

<b>Quebec</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	12.6	13.5	14.6	14.4
<b>Federal administration</b>	13.4	12.1	13.7	14.4
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11.5	10.1	11.9	18
<b>Local and other administration</b>	14.8	12.4	15.3	9.2
<b>Private sector</b>	7.7	8.4	8.2	9.1

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	14.3	14.9	16.5	16.7
<b>Federal administration</b>	16.7	14.8	16.4	16.8
<b>Provincial administration</b>	12.7	12	14.5	20.5
<b>Local and other administration</b>	15.9	13.1	17	11.8
<b>Private sector</b>	9	9.7	9.6	10.4

New Brunswick

<b>New Brunswick</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	11.9	11.2	12	12.6
<b>Federal administration</b>	13.2	14.6	21.2	14
<b>Provincial administration</b>	9.5	6.8	9.1	10.3
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7.5	8.1	7.9	7.4

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	13.9	12.9	14.1	15
<b>Federal administration</b>	18.9	16.7	24.7	15.4
<b>Provincial administration</b>	10.9	8.6	10.1	12
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	9	9.5	9.2	8.9

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia				
Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability				
Population	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Public sector</b>	12	11.5	11.9	11.8
<b>Federal administration</b>	6.5	22.1	13.6	14.3
<b>Provincial administration</b>	11.5	8.9	11	7.4
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7.2	7.1	8.4	7.5

Total Days Lost Per Worker				
Population	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Public sector</b>	13.9	14.1	13.7	14.2
<b>Federal administration</b>	8.8	24	15.7	16.9
<b>Provincial administration</b>	12.9	11.9	12.4	9
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	12.2
<b>Private sector</b>	9.2	8.4	9.7	9.1

Prince Edward Island

<b>Prince Edward Island</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	10.9	10.2	10.3	10
<b>Federal administration</b>	9.1	12	-	7.4
<b>Provincial administration</b>	10.7	-	-	-
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7	7.3	7.7	8

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	13.7	12.7	12.9	12.9
<b>Federal administration</b>	13.5	14.8	12.4	10.9
<b>Provincial administration</b>	14	8.5	14.5	-
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	8.8	8.8	9.2	9.4



Newfoundland and Labrador

<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>				
<b>Days Lost Per Worker Due to Illness or disability</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	12.9	13.3	11.3	11.2
<b>Federal administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Provincial administration</b>	9.6	-	-	9.6
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	7.1	6.8	6.6	6.5

<b>Total Days Lost Per Worker</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	15	15.7	13.1	14.2
<b>Federal administration</b>	15.1	14.3	-	13.5
<b>Provincial administration</b>	12.2	10.1	7.5	11.1
<b>Local and other administration</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Private sector</b>	8.4	8.3	7.8	8

## Methodology

- All data is from Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey custom tabulations
  - '-' indicate that Statistics Canada deemed the information "too unreliable to publish"
- *Government sector* includes "employees in public administration at the federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, First Nations and other Aboriginal levels as well as in Crown corporations, liquor control boards and other government institutions such as schools (including universities), hospitals and public libraries." [Statistics Canada: Guide to the Labour Force Survey](#)
  - *Private sector includes* "all other employees and self-employed owners of businesses (including unpaid family workers in those businesses), and self-employed persons without businesses." [Statistics Canada: Guide to the Labour Force Survey](#)
- *Public Administration* includes "establishments primarily engaged in activities of a governmental nature, that is, the enactment and judicial interpretation of laws and their pursuant regulations, and the administration of programs based on them. Legislative activities, taxation, national defence, public order and safety, immigration services, foreign affairs and international assistance, and the administration of government programs are activities that are purely governmental in nature. Ownership is not a criterion for classification. Government owned establishments engaged in activities that are not governmental in nature are classified to the same industry as privately owned establishments engaged in similar activities." [North American Industry Classification System](#)