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## NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training  
and Responsible for Labour

### **B.C. bans mandatory high heels in the workplace**

VICTORIA – The B.C. government has followed through on its commitment to ban mandatory high heels in the workplace, announced Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour, Shirley Bond.

The requirement to wear high heels in some workplaces is a workplace health and safety issue. There is a risk of physical injury from slipping or falling, as well as possible damage to the feet, legs and back from prolonged wearing of high heels while at work.

The change was made by amending the existing footwear regulation (section 8.22) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, under the Workers Compensation Act.

The amended regulation ensures that workplace footwear is of a design, construction and material that allows the worker to safely perform their work and ensures that employers cannot require footwear contrary to this standard. To determine appropriate footwear, the following factors must be considered: slipping, tripping, uneven terrain, abrasion, ankle protection and foot support, crushing potential, potential for musculoskeletal injury, temperature extremes, corrosive substances, puncture hazards, electrical shock and any other recognizable hazard.

WorkSafeBC will develop a workplace guideline for employers and employees to support the amended regulation. The guideline is expected to be available by the end of April.

Under B.C.'s Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, WorkSafeBC already requires employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace that is free from discrimination or harassment for their employees. As well, the Human Rights Code provides protections against sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in British Columbia, and that includes in the workplace.

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Premier Christy Clark –**

“In some workplaces in our province, women are required to wear high heels on the job. Like most British Columbians, our government thinks this is wrong. That is why we’re changing this regulation to stop this unsafe and discriminatory practice and adding an enforcement element by WorkSafeBC.”

##### **Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour –**

“I’d like to recognize and thank Dr. Weaver for working with us on amending this regulation. This change will let employers know that the most critical part of an employee’s footwear is that it is safe. I expect employers to recognize this very clear signal that forcing someone to wear high heels at work is unacceptable.”

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