

# Canada to prosecute crimes on the moon

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Canada is amending its laws to allow for the prosecution of crimes on the Moon and orbiting lunar stations, by astronauts such as these pictured in a SpaceX capsule on a launchpad at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida in April 2021.

Canadian lawmakers on Thursday passed an amendment to the nation's Criminal Code to allow for the prosecution of crimes committed on the moon.

The change to the law—which MPs voted 181 to 144 in favor—was described in a 443-page budget implementation bill presented to

Parliament this week.

Ottawa has already extended its jurisdiction over criminal acts committed by Canadian astronauts during space travel to the International Space Station.

They are treated the same as crimes committed in Canada.

The update comes as the number of space flights are increasing, and ahead of the first crewed mission to the moon in more than 50 years set to launch in May 2024, with a Canadian astronaut expected to be on board the Artemis II lunar flyby.

Under the subheading Lunar Gateway, the Criminal Code amendment reads: "A Canadian crew member who, during a space flight, commits an act or omission outside Canada that if committed in Canada would constitute an indictable offense is deemed to have committed that act or omission in Canada."

This would include crimes en route to or on the Lunar Gateway station currently in the works to orbit the moon, and also "on the surface of the moon," the document states.

Foreign astronauts who "threaten the life or security of a Canadian crew member" on a Canadian-supported space mission could also be prosecuted, according to the ways and means motion.

The Canadian Space Agency is participating in the NASA-led Lunar Gateway project, along with the European Space Agency and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.

Starting as early as 2026, the outpost will act as a staging point for robotic and crewed exploration of the lunar surface, as well as travel to

Mars.

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