



Impact



Message from the President December 2017

New Positions and Plans to Ease Workload Concerns

Throughout this year your Union has been raising Members' workload concerns with the Employer.

a scheduled retirement. With current vacancies and advance hires for upcoming retirements, around 100 jobs will be posted across Prevention and Claims. This will result in a significant recruitment drive and the Employer has hired additional Human Resources Staff to ensure recruitment goes forward quickly.

While workload is a factor in many areas, we have been hearing loud and clear from Case Managers, Vocational Rehab. Consultants, Service Coordinators, Entitlement Officers and Return to Work Specialists that something had to be done to address their workload problems. The work on desks has been increasing in complexity; demands on documentation have changed due to appeal decisions; the percentage of psychological factors on claims have increased; and, new claims have simply increased. These factors (and many others) have combined with outstanding vacant positions and retiring co-workers. As a result, we have not only pushed for changes to work processes, but for an increase in full time equivalent positions to address the myriad of workload problems.

These are early stages of the changes, and we will continue to meet with the Employer on an ongoing basis to discuss changes to work processes. I am aware that the Employer will be meeting with Members around the province in early 2018, primarily in Claims' classifications, to discuss their proposed changes. We will endeavour to have Union Representatives in attendance in these meetings so that we are informed of the messaging and the feedback you provide.

You will have heard by now that the Employer has acknowledged your concerns, and will be moving forward on a number of fronts to address the problems. In my view the most significant achievement has been the Employer's decision to increase the overall number of jobs at the Board. Approximately 115 positions have been added to the 2018 budget. This should start to ease workload concerns in various departments.

I know for many that help cannot come soon enough. It will take time to recruit and get resources in place. We will continue to pressure the Employer to move forward on the recruitment and system changes quickly. I do hope that by the end of 2018, there will be tangible improvement to many of the workload issues.

In Claims alone, the Employer will be adding approximately 40 full time bargaining unit positions. And the Employer has committed to advance hire for pending retirements in Claims in plenty of time to train new Members – not merely 1 month before

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Maternity / Parental Leave Legislation Changes to the Length of EI, Not the Length of Leave

The Federal government recently introduced changes to the Employment Insurance legislation. Starting on December 3, 2017, Employment Insurance applicants for Maternity / Parental Leave EI benefits may, if they choose, take the existing 35 weeks of EI benefits spread over 61 weeks. Note that the total EI benefit amount hasn't been increased. An applicant may simply spread the 35 weeks' worth of parental benefits over 61 weeks, by taking less money every week, to make the total amount stretch over a longer period. This new rule applies to CEU Members who apply for maternity / parental leave EI benefits after December 3rd.

It is important to note, however, that under the new changes implemented on December 3rd, only Federally-regulated Employers, such as airports,

banks, and the Federal government, are required to allow Employees to take up to 18 months off.

The Workers' Compensation Board is a provincially-regulated Employer, and as such, is not legally obligated to allow a parent off work for 18 months (ie. the federal legislative changes don't apply). In this regard, it's been reported that only approximately 8% of Canadians truly benefit from all the recent legislative changes, given that 92% of workers in Canada fall under provincial legislation. Unless the BC government introduces similar legislative changes, Members who wish to have more than the customary 12 months off for maternity / parental leave must continue to apply for Care and Nurturing Leave (or another Leave provision) under the Collective Agreement.



Report from Camp Jubilee

Alysa Naidu

Alysa attended Camp Jubilee this past Summer:
"I want to thank the CEU for an amazing opportunity this Summer. I was able to attend Camp Jubilee for one week. I had been to camp for the first time in grade 6. I had gone with my school for 3 days. I was excited to win but also a bit anxious as I would not know anyone at camp. I had the best time and made friends that I would never have met. The camp counsellors are fantastic and the food outstanding. I won "Queen of High Ropes." I have a fear of heights so this was quite an achievement. If you have a family member who is a member of the CEU I would highly recommend putting your name in for next year.
THANK YOU CEU"

Matt Del Rosario

Matt is 9 years old and attended Camp Jubilee this past Summer.

His Mom, Shelley,

said she had a hard time getting anything out of him with regard to his experience, other than, "I had fun! Archery was harder than I thought, but everything else was fun."

Shelley adds, "Thank you for the opportunity for my son to go to his first sleep away camp. If it were not for the CEU sponsorship, it is unlikely he would have gone. It was a great experience for him and I have noticed a confidence in him that he did not have prior to camp."



Steward Spotlight - Jennifer Covelli

I started at the Board about 3 and a half years ago in July 2014. I have been in Return to Work Services as a Nurse since my hire date. I am currently a Member in the BC Nurses' Union, as well as, a CEU Member. In my past, I was a Member of the United Nurses' of Alberta, too.

While I have never been a Steward in a Union before, I got involved with the CEU because I was looking to explore new opportunities to grow and challenge myself. I enjoy working with people and developing supportive working relationships. I genuinely believe the dyad of the Employer and Employees can be collaborative and constructive, striving to achieve goals and objectives that best meet both parties' needs.

I feel most rewarded in my role as a Steward when I can provide support to my colleagues and help them achieve an objective they sought. I love to hear success stories and how I may have had a small part in it - even if it is just lending an ear. My goal is to actively listen and understand what the issues are, lend an empathetic ear, while facilitating a solution whenever possible.

The hardest part of being a Steward is ensuring you are fully available to meet the needs of the Members. There is always so much going on in life and the hustle and bustle can be overwhelming at times. Being present and serving my colleagues as a Steward is extremely important to me while maintaining a positive and cooperative working relationship with our Employer.

With regard to our Collective Agreement, the Article I value the most is Article 1. The reason for this is that it outlines the purpose of the Collective Agreement between the CEU and WCB. And that purpose is to "foster a consultative and mutually beneficial relationship between the parties". Having a thorough understanding of the rights and responsibilities for each Party facilitates thoughtful discussion and meaningful conflict resolution.

Looking to the future, I believe the important issues facing the Union are: staffing, including adequate support resourcing; fair and consistent vacation opportunities; flexible work arrangements, including working from home; and, the promotion and support of work-life balance.



Working for you.....full time.

My name is Laura Snow and I have been proud to serve as your CEU Treasurer for 6 years now. Over these years, my Union Treasurer work has become more complex, and with additional Pension and Committee work, my Union time has steadily increased. Last month, after a 6-month trial of full time Union Leave, the Union Executive agreed to place me on full time Union leave, until the end of my current Treasurer term, so that we can ensure continued service to the Membership. In practical terms, this means that WCB will continue to pay me my Entitlement Officer salary and the Union will reimburse them for these costs.

Historically, the CEU President has been booked off on full time Union business - as it is now with Sandra Wright - and until a couple of years ago, the CEU Vice President was also assigned full time Union work. However, during that period, the CEU Treasurer also worked between 2-4 days a week carrying out the duties of the Treasurer, depending on what was required from week-to-week. As things have shifted and changed, so have we, and we have found that as with most smaller Unions, our current need is for the President and Treasurer to perform Union work full time.

Here are some things that fill my days beyond my regular Treasurer duties. In addition to Chairing

the Investment Committee (to ensure the CEU Surplus and Defense Funds are secure and invested appropriately within the guidelines of our policy restrictions) and Chairing the Finance Committee (to establish various components of the CEU budget through consultation with the differing Committees and Union leaders), I also Chair the Drug & Alcohol Committee; the EFAP Committee; the Grievance Appeal Committee; and, the Bursary Committee. I have an active role on the BC Federation of Labour's OH&S Committee and I lead many other Union-related projects. You will likely see me at the Richmond location many days per week as I attend the CEU - Worker & Employer Services meetings and new Employee Orientation sessions.

I love the finance portions of my Treasurer role (Super Nerd Alert) and being part of the bigger labour movement. Whenever possible, I take the CEU flag to rallies to show our support for other workers, as our Members may also need support one day.

So why this Impact article? As with my Treasurer work, transparency is important to me, as it is to the rest of the CEU Executive. All of us at CEU want to keep you informed. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback for me in my Union role, please let me know: laurasnow@ceu.bc.ca



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Laura Snow, Treasurer
Debbie Naidu, Secretary
Howard Lin, Chair Shop Stewards

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Vacant, Director
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Adam Andrews, Director

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#120-13775 Commerce Parkway, Richmond, BC, V6V 2V4 Ph:(604) 278-4050 Fax: (604) 278-5002 www.ceu.bc.ca

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