



# FYI



## | PLEASE POST |

**Date:** February 19, 2020

**To:** All Employment and Assistance Workers (EAW)

**Re:** EAW Classification Appeal Update

The BCGEU (union) wishes to thank all EAWs who participated in worksite visits as part of the classification appeal process, and who have sent in work examples and information. We have now had joint union and BC Public Service Agency (PSA) visits at five offices.

We will accept further work examples **until Monday, March 2, 2020** at: [ClassificationAppeals.EAW@bcgeu.ca](mailto:ClassificationAppeals.EAW@bcgeu.ca). After that date, the PSA will begin work on its job evaluation. The usual 60 day period is likely to be extended due to the comprehensive work to be done, as well as to ensure consideration of all work examples. Watch for further timeline updates on the component 6 resources page, however it may be into the summer before we receive the PSA's response. Note that deadline extensions requested by either the PSA or union will not affect the effective date for retroactive pay which remains fixed at the appeal's Part 2 date of October 17, 2011.

### **Basis for the job evaluation**

As with all appeals, the EAW job will be objectively evaluated using the Public Service Job Evaluation Plan (the Plan). This includes factor definitions for 13 different factors, each measured at varying degree levels, and exemplified by over 400 benchmark jobs. The job profile is reviewed and taken into consideration, but the main focus will be on what was observed during the work visits and on work examples, and will take all aspects and streams of the EAW job into consideration.

### **Worksite summaries**

Earlier bulletins outlined our visits to the Abbotsford and Strathcona offices. We visited the **Surrey North** office on January 22, 2020 where it was helpful to see EAW work on cheque issue day. Several incidents occurred requiring everyone to move back from the front wickets for the situation to be deescalated, and police were called several times. We observed front counter client services, as well as work involving documents first, funerals, reconsiderations, general intake and assisted eligibilities.

We spent a day at the **Lower Mainland Contact Centre** on January 28<sup>th</sup> where we had general discussions about the work, and were able to listen to several calls. These included dealing with a difficult advocate and subsequent Community Relations Service Quality (CRSQ) involvement, crisis supplements (shelter, beds, clothing, and utilities), persons with disabilities issues, bus passes, and cuts to CPP disability benefits. We also learned about call priorities and coding of service requests.



Our final worksite visit was February 5, 2020 at the **Nanaimo** office. It was helpful to gather general information and listen to several in-depth calls, including for a specialized hospital intake with a third party social worker for a psychotic client, and assisting a recently separated mother facing an eviction notice. We also learned about medical services only, trust situations, overpayments and health assistance caseloads.

### **General observations of EAW work**

At all locations, we discussed how EAW work has changed over time, particularly since 2007. Everyone clearly recognized the dedication of all EAWs to provide the best client services on behalf of people in the most desperate of circumstances, where it often feels that every situation is different. Many of you noted that changes in socio-economic and crisis conditions have, in turn, put pressure on EAWs, and that EAWs have to develop many skills, as well as deal with expanded or changing government services and priorities, and ongoing technological changes. There are also requirements to deal with clients in a broad-based provincial virtual role, requiring teamwork, consistency and knowledge of local community resources, while still providing front-facing services and exercising discretion (i.e. before ICM prompts). This occurs within ever changing policy objectives for service delivery. Job Aids and SOPs may help EAWs when assessing and making decisions, given the available client information and broad range of circumstances, but it was generally acknowledged that these are no replacement for EAWs understanding the underlying legislative requirements. Communication aspects were emphasized, including the need for understanding social barriers, often while also being mindful of time and business requirements.

### **Note – contact information for those retiring or leaving the EAW job**

Please keep the union up to date with your current contact information, particularly your personal email address which we will use to contact you should you leave the EAW position.

### **Frequently asked questions**

[Here is a link](#) for those interested in details of the job evaluation process and timelines, and to answer some of the questions and issues raised during our worksite visits.

**Note: please direct all appeal communications here:** [ClassificationAppeals.EAW@bcgeu.ca](mailto:ClassificationAppeals.EAW@bcgeu.ca)

In solidarity,

Judy Fox-McGuire – Component 6 Vice-President  
Jennifer Jordan – Staff Representative, Negotiations

**Reminder:** BCGEU members are getting a new Member ID card in the near future; make sure your mailing address is up to date. Go to [www.bcgeu.ca/card-questions for details](http://www.bcgeu.ca/card-questions-for-details).

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