

My name is Kathleen Dow and I would like a seat at the Equity and Human Right Committee for the BCGEU. I have been a steward with MCFD from 2018 through to 2021. I also was an employee Co-Chair for Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee during this time. I have put my name forward to serve as a steward in my new work area with the Ministry of Finance. As a steward I have assisted members who face barriers in the workplace due to their disabilities. The progress of accommodation requests are greatly impacted by the knowledge that the member, the steward, and management possess when barriers are identified. Personally, I experienced a precarious employment situation when I finished my cancer treatments. I had fought for my life and then began a fight to retain my employment in the private sector. I found that supports with employment issues for people with disabilities are sparse and sometimes non-existent. We are fortunate as members of the BCGEU to have supports available within the union that are simply not available elsewhere. However I believe that even with union support many of our members with disabilities are experiencing less than optimal employment outcomes. I was inspired by the 2019 report and proposed recommendations that the 2019 BCGEU workers with disabilities roundtable produced. If I am your choice for this committee I will continue to advocate that our membership have increased access to resources and education, seek to build strong partnerships with disability rights organizations, and assist to develop processes that encourage stronger representation of workers with disabilities among union activists.