



April 2, 2020

**Via email:** [john.davison@gov.bc.ca](mailto:john.davison@gov.bc.ca)

Mr John Davison, Assistant Deputy Minister  
BC Public Service Agency  
1<sup>st</sup> Fl, 810 Blanshard Street  
Victoria, BC

Dear John

I am writing to you in my capacity as the BCGEU negotiator assigned to our Public Service Bargaining Unit to request an urgent meeting to discuss appropriate measures, which the BCGEU and the Government of BC could agree on in light of the current Covid-19 Pandemic.

The designation of most members of the public service as essential by Emergency Management BC and the Provincial Health Officer means that our members are working every day to deliver the services on which British Columbians have come to rely. BCGEU public service members are doing their best to provide these services in extremely challenging times.

We have appreciated the efforts of yourself and other senior members of the public service, as we have worked jointly to address the many challenges over the last few weeks. We have jointly worked to ensure worker safety while at the same time deliver essential services.

However, we are now at the point we believe where it is imperative that the bargaining agents turn their minds to what additional measures are needed in the current crisis.

As a starting point, the BCGEU proposes that we enter into a Pandemic Response Memorandum for the term of the current provincial state of emergency.

We believe the following are some of the points we should address:

- 1. Compensation for Essential Services Workers:** The province has designated the public service as essential employees. We have seen the response of many employers in this circumstance where they have initiated various forms of additional pay for their employees during the current crisis as a recognition for the essential work performed. Following up on our various conversations,

 2994 Douglas St.  
Victoria, B.C. V8T 4N4

 250-388-9948 (PHONE)  
1-800-667-1033 (T-F)

 250-384-8060 (Fax)  
1-800-946-0246 (T-F)



we believe we should apply this approach to the public service. We also note that various senior officials in the public service are telling our members to come to the union about this issue.

2. **"Me Too" Provisions of our Collective Agreement:** We believe that today's announcement by health employers to apply an increased dollar per hour payment to all nurses starting this month triggers "*me too*" provisions of our agreement, as the compensation paid to the nurses bargaining unit will exceed 6% over the term. I also note that we have nurses receiving this additional pay in correctional centers working side by side with our correctional officers in the same challenging environment. This is fundamentally unfair. If not addressed, this inequity will lead to considerable labour relations instability.
3. **Reassignment of Public Service Members:** We have already seen some public service members in licensing and regulatory jobs reassigned from their regular duties to higher priority work. We have also suggested that some workers, like deputy sheriffs, could also be reassigned to essential duties outside of courts. We think discussions leading to an agreement in this area will assist essential service delivery.
4. **Vacation Scheduling and Carry Over:** We are seeing members cancelling and rescheduling vacation. This will assist with the current crisis, but will need to be dealt with soon to prevent scheduling chaos.
5. **Work Schedules and Hours of Work:** This is a topic of discussion in many areas and we believe an orderly approach will assist both parties.

These and other issues would form the basis to amend the 18<sup>th</sup> collective agreements between the parties for the period of the current state of emergency.

I look forward to your urgent attention to this proposal.

Sincerely,

*Mike Eso*

Michael Eso  
Regional Coordinator

:lal  
MoveUP