

COVID-19 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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March 16/17, 2020 from unions

- 1. Question:** Given vacations that have been cancelled due to travel restrictions and anticipated vacation cancellations due to operational requirements during the pandemic event, can we agree to allow employees to carry over vacation beyond July 1<sup>st</sup>, notwithstanding provisions to the contrary in the collective agreement?

**Answer:** The employer is prepared to allow carry over vacation beyond July 1<sup>st</sup> notwithstanding the provisions of Part III collective agreements. In addition, the timelines respecting the scheduling of vacations for the current calendar year will be postponed. The scheduling of vacations will be undertaken at a later time in accordance with the provisions of the collective agreements. Notice will be provided to the unions and employees at our first opportunity.

- 2. Question:** Can pregnant workers be accommodated to the least stressful roles for their position at their location?

**Answer:** The work performed by pregnant workers and the level of stress it poses may vary based on individual circumstances. Therefore, all accommodations will continue to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

- 3. Question:** Where do employees working within the ISD program fall, particularly those in the PSPS bargaining unit that work with the ISD teams? There is different information coming for Parts II and III, which do they follow?

**Answer:** Nurses and SHCP members fall within Part III. PSPS members fall within Part II. Directives issued by those Parts will apply to members, respectively. GNB is transitioning from normal operations to focus on maintaining critical programs and services. Some, or all, ISD employees have been identified as workers providing critical services. They are to follow the directives provided by their managers.

- 4. Question:** Can employees cancel their vacation and go back to work?

**Answer:** During the term of the pandemic, employees will be permitted to cancel their vacation and return to work. Vacation leave credits will be placed back in vacation banks and work will be distributed based on operational needs to those employees available for work. Neither an employee cancelling their vacation nor a replacement worker who had accepted the shift will suffer a loss of pay as a result. Employees may be redeployed to assist in the areas with the greatest need.

- 5. Question:** Where employees are in self-isolation they will receive 14 days paid leave. What if overtime shifts were scheduled during the period? Will the shifts be paid at the regular or overtime rate?

**Answer:** For employees who left Canada before March 13, 2020, such shift(s) will be paid at the overtime rate. Employees who left Canada after March 13 are required to take vacation time (or other

bank time or leave without pay) during their self-isolation and any overtime or casual shifts would be cancelled.

- 6. Question:** If an employee is infected and has been off work, what will be the protocol to return to work?

**Answer:** Consultation with Public Health is underway. Answer to Follow.

- 7. Question:** What happens to an employee that has not travelled internationally but appears to be showing symptoms of COVID – 19, do they self-isolate 14 days and is that Paid Leave?

**Answer:** Consultation with Public Health is underway. Answer to Follow.

- 8. Question:** If a member of my immediate family has a positive test for COVID-19, what am I to do? Do I automatically self-isolate for 14 days and is that Paid Leave?

**Answer:** Consultation with Public Health is underway. Answer to Follow.

- 9. Question:** A family member is an international long-haul trucker, do I need to be concerned about self-isolation or simply monitor and then if I show symptoms and have to isolate does this become paid leave?

**Answer:** Consultation with Public Health is underway. Answer to Follow.

- 10. Question:** What is the intent for day care for critical service workers?

**Answer:** As a first step, we ask that employees attempt to the best of their ability to make alternate childcare arrangements. As a second step, if the employees are unable to make alternate childcare arrangements, we ask that they work from home if they are equipped to do so. We know that the employees' ability to work from home will also depend greatly on the level of care their child or children require. As a third step, parents who require early learning and child care are directed to contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on how to access child care services through their Parent Portal or by calling 1-833-221-9339.

- 11. Question:** Some employees are concerned about the availability of personal protective equipment (specifically N-95 respirators). What is the Employer doing about this?

**Answer:** The organizations understand the need to provide adequate PPE to employees. The organizations are also working hard to disseminate appropriate information respecting PPE to employees.