

SPECTRUM

Society for Community Living

www.spectrumsociety.org

Wage Equity Update #6 - January 15th, 2000

Wage Equity Coming Soon!

The Executive Director of the Public Sector Employers' Council wrote the following e-mail this week, outlining the government's intentions regarding wage equity:

"Thank-you for your email below. I appreciate your sentiments and your frustration. The perception that PSEC has a pro-union bias is unfortunate.

PSEC is currently working with CSSEA, funding Ministries and Treasury Board on funding options for employees in non-union agencies. Any increase will have to be approved by Treasury Board.

We hope to be in a position to make an announcement on a possible increase within the next few weeks.

Once again Thank-you for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Regards

**Roy A. Emperingham, Executive Director
Public Sector Employers Council Secretariat
Phone 250 356 0231 Cell 250 361 7527 Fax 250 387 6258
Email Roy.Emperingham@gems1.gov.bc.ca**

As well, John Neilson, the CEO of the Community Social Service Employers' Association wrote the following e-mail in December:

The thing that is different this time is that the players at the other end (PSEC and MCF) are finally on the same page as we are. MCF is now taking some ownership, and PSEC is heeding the message that there is a will to make this increase happen. Up until recently, it seemed that CSSEA was rolling this rock by itself and latterly, the Unfair Labour Practice complaint added some leverage, but it has required the support of the Ministry to get the issue to the top of the agenda. Its a bittersweet moment for us in that we have been telling the Ministry for a long time that it needed to own this issue as it has direct implications on service delivery i.e. the ability of non-union agencies to attract and retain competent staff. MCF was prepared to leave involvement with HR/LR issues to PSEC. That is no longer the case.

John

While neither e-mail is a solid guarantee of an imminent wage increase, they are more confident than any e-mails in the past. As you can see, Spectrum continues to push for fair wages for all its employees. We wrote to Roy Emperingham as he was recently assigned to the CSSEA board as a PSEC representative. We wanted to ensure he knew that wage equity was a priority issue before his first CSSEA board meeting.

Jan 10, 2000

Dear Mr. Emperingham;

I am writing to you as I read in the CSSEA newsletter that you are the new PSEC representative on the CSSEA Board of Directors.

I am Executive Director of a small non-profit agency that has 120 employees. Our funding is almost entirely through the Ministry for Children and Families. Our agency has not received an increase for employee wages since 1995. This is in stark contrast to unionized agencies that have received increased funding from the Ministry for Children and Families every year, and have received two substantial funding increases in the past four years. (Mar31, 1998 - wage increase to \$14.45/hour and October 1, 1999 - wage increase to \$15.00/hour or more).

Your agency (PSEC) is being perceived as having a strong pro-union bias because of this lack of funding for non-union agencies. Our employees have been strongly lobbied by a number of unions, each distributing copies of the mediators recommendations, and each promising the wage package guaranteed by PSEC.

Why does our government require employees to sign union cards before they receive fair and equitable treatment?

If our employees continue to reject the idea of 3rd party representation, and continue to believe that their employer is honestly representing their best interests in its negotiations with government, will they continue to be discriminated against?

I have attempted to negotiate higher wages with my local Ministry contract managers, but each time I am re-directed to PSEC or CSSEA as the only source of increased funding for wages.

Please update me on any progress towards fair wages for non-union employees.

Sincerely,

**Ernie Baatz
Executive Director
Spectrum Society for Community Living**

Annual Spectrum Forum

We have reserved the Oakridge Auditorium for February 21st, 2000 and invite all who are interested in the future of Spectrum to attend. This forum gives everybody an opportunity to discuss the direction for Spectrum in the coming years. We hope to see you there!