



Newsletter

Dorsey upholds delayed start of 37.5-hour work week

Arbitrator James Dorsey clarifies that the implementation date of the government-imposed 37.5-hour work week may be no sooner than September 30, 2004.

In his written decision issued Friday, Dorsey concludes that "... the effective date is intended to be the start of the first pay period before or "no later than" the ninetieth calendar day.

"... In conclusion, an employer bound by the collective agreement can make the longer 37.5 work week effective at the start of a fourteen day pay period that commences on any of the days from September 30 to October 13, 2004, inclusive."

Hospital Employees' Union secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt says that this is good news for tens of thousands of health care workers in hospitals and long-term care facilities across BC.

"Dorsey's clarification of the implementation of the 37.5-hour work week means less upheaval for health workers and the system," he says. "Now the longer work week can be introduced in a more practical and reasonable way."

Friday's decision also means that the four-per-cent cut to hourly wages that accompanies the 37.5-hour work week is delayed.

Allnutt says that health employers may seek to appeal but warns that such a move would be counterproductive.

"Health employers would be well-advised to accept the arbitrator's clarification. By not accepting the original award, they've already caused enough unnecessary chaos."

Allnutt notes that any prematurely issued layoff notices still outstanding should be rescinded immediately.

JULY 23, 2004



