



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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HEU will meet with government, HEABC in October for further talks on Bill 29

*Some layoffs will be put on hold though government won't
put a stop to contract-flipping in long-term care*

An initial meeting between health unions and government on the outcome of last June's court ruling on *Bill 29* wrapped up Thursday with a commitment to further meetings and a suspension of involuntary layoffs under the facilities agreement.

HEU's secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that the tone of the discussions was positive and that despite differing interpretations of the landmark Supreme Court ruling, both sides appear committed to negotiating solutions.

"I expect some tough negotiations around the implementation of the court decision," says Darcy. "But I believe all parties are prepared to commit the time necessary to settle this matter.

"We believe that we have an historic opportunity to restore our members' constitutionally-protected rights while finding lasting solutions that improve public health care."

HEU and its union bargaining partners in the Facilities Bargaining Association will sit down with government and representatives of the Health Employers Association of BC in early October.

At these meetings, the union will negotiate for redress for members affected by *Bill 29* and also for the restoration of collective bargaining rights.

There will be separate meetings with government to discuss changes in legislation needed to bring government laws into compliance with the Supreme Court decision, as well as on other common issues as required. These meetings will include representatives from the Facilities Bargaining Association, the Community Bargaining Association, the Nurses Bargaining Association and the Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association.

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The process is expected to take several months.

In the meantime, there will be no involuntary layoffs as a result of contracting out by health authorities or their affiliates covered by the current facilities collective agreement until such time as there is a negotiated agreement or future legislation that addresses this matter.

And the expected layoff of 66 positions at MSA Hospital in Abbotsford in plant maintenance and food services resulting from the opening of the new P3 hospital will also be put on hold, pending future agreements.

In terms of planned P3 hospital projects in the Okanagan, Surrey and Victoria, the government and health authorities will abide by the terms of any agreements or future legislation affecting members' jobs and will make that clear in Request for Proposal documents that are issued for these projects.

But government representatives said that they will not declare a moratorium on layoffs related to the flipping of commercial contracts in long-term care.

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