



Newsletter

Allocation of \$25 million severance fund awaits better information from employers

DISCUSSIONS about the allocation of the \$25 million in severance funding earmarked for contracted out health workers in the May 2 memorandum of agreement that ended job action this Spring are underway but incomplete information from health employers about eligible, laid-off employees is slowing the process.

Chris Allnutt, secretary-business manager of the Hospital Employees' Union, says that it's important that the money be divided up as fairly as possible.

"We need health employers to provide complete, accurate information about laid-off members because we want to ensure that severance payments are properly calculated," he says. "Payments will need to reflect years of service and full-time or part-time hours worked in order to compensate members fairly.

"The Health Employers Association of B.C. has given us some information, but it contains gaps and is so inaccurate that we cannot use it as a basis for dividing up the \$25 million."

The memorandum designates the severance funding "for current regular employees who leave health sector employment as a direct result of contracting [out] up to March 31, 2006 including regular employees currently employed by a health sector employer who received notice of layoff prior to May 1, 2004 as a direct result of contracting out and are currently working out their lay-off notice."

Regular employees covers full-time and part-time workers but does not apply to casuals.

The memorandum's \$25 million is in addition to and separate from regular severance provisions in the facilities subsector collective agreement.

Allnutt says that the union will report to members on the status of the severance fund as soon as there is anything more substantial to report.

"We are very aware that laid-off members need this extra money and are pressing employers for more accurate information so that we can finalize their entitlements," says Allnutt.

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