



Economic growth numbers trigger modest additional wage hike for many HEU members

Economic Stability Dividend provision in contracts covering more than 250,000 public sector workers will provide additional 0.45 per cent wage increase in February 2016

The B.C. government announced Tuesday that a 0.45 per cent general wage increase will be paid to more than a quarter million public sector workers including HEU members working in the facilities, community social services and community health sectors.

The modest boost – about 10 cents an hour for the average HEU member – is triggered by the announcement last week of growth numbers for the B.C. economy for 2014 and will be paid out in February 2016.

The Economic Stability Dividend (ESD) was included in all public sector collective agreements reached in the 2014 round of bargaining as a condition of settlement by government. It is paid in addition to other negotiated wage increases.

HEU secretary-business manager Jennifer Whiteside says that while the wage boost is welcome, most HEU members are still not earning much more than they were a dozen years ago.

“More than a decade of wage restraint and roll-backs barred our members from sharing in the economic prosperity of our province,” says Whiteside. “The Economic Stability Dividend doesn’t do much to change that reality.”

The ESD is calculated as 50 per cent of the difference between forecast growth numbers and actual growth in the economy. In 2014, actual growth outpaced forecast growth by 0.9 per cent resulting in the 0.45 per cent ESD.

The ESD will also be calculated for 2015, 2016 and 2017 and will be paid out, if applicable, in February of 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

The ESD will not result in a wage adjustment for years where economic growth fails to exceed forecast growth.

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