

SGEU Health Providers COVID-19 Pandemic Update

March 21, 2020



At this time there is much uncertainty for our SGEU Health Provider members, with circumstances changing almost hourly. One thing you can be certain of is that your Bargaining Committee is working hard to continue to provide support and look for solutions.

We have had many questions surrounding some current issues that we know are important to you. We will try to address some of those in this update.

Health Provider members and self-isolating

In accordance with the Order from the Government of Saskatchewan on March 20, 2020, effective immediately, all persons who have travelled internationally shall go into mandatory self-isolation for 14 days from date of arrival back into Canada. This means that employees, physicians, students and volunteers who have returned from international travel on March 6, 2020 or later must immediately self-isolate. Please contact your manager to advise them that you are required to self-isolate. This Order also included exemptions for health care workers. Health care workers who have travelled internationally **may be exempt only if they are required to work to maintain essential health care services or provide emergency health care.** If the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) determines a healthcare worker is exempt, the worker must be supervised by Infection Prevention and Control Officers and/or Occupational Health and Safety in the workplace.

You may have recently received the SaskAlert telling you that you will be fined \$2000 if you do not self-isolate; this does not apply to those that are exempt as directed by the SHA. Keep in mind that the exemption applies only for you to go into work, not out into other public areas in the community.

Job Postings

Postings will continue with priority given to essential staffing and where there are staff shortages.

Union/Management Meetings

Only urgent meetings between Union and Management will take place. These will be done via Web-ex or tele-conference as necessary. All non-urgent meetings will be postponed. If a face-to-face meeting is required, it will occur in a facility that does not see patients whenever possible. Grievances already in the system will be postponed unless of serious nature.

Annual Vacation Request

At this point, the SHA and SGEU Health Providers have agreed to make some adjustments to the annual vacation processes as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. If the pandemic situation changes and the annual vacation process and/or timelines need to be adjusted

further, the SHA and SGEU Health providers will regroup and reassess. Any resulting changes will be communicated to staff as soon as a new decision is made.

Below is how the vacation process will work:

1. By April 1, 2020 employees will need to submit their vacation requests for the month of May. Those requests will be processed in order of seniority by April 15. After April 1, 2020, any requests received for the month of May will be processed on a first-come-first-serve basis.
2. By May 1, 2020 employees will need to submit their vacation requests for the month of June. Those requests will be processed in order of seniority by May 15. After May 15, 2020, any requests received for the month of June will be filled on a first-come-first-serve basis.
3. That process will continue in that manner until such time as the pandemic is in the recovery phase and the parties identify some reasonable dates to revert to an annual vacation process for the remainder of the year.
4. Employees can choose to submit an entire year's requests by April 1st (rather than the monthly process described above) and these requests will be reviewed on the 1st of each month, along with other requests.
5. Any staff that have already submitted their vacation requests in accordance with the annual process will need to confirm with their local scheduling department if they wish to change/cancel previous requests. The Employer suggests that this be done prior to April 1 to align with the above process.

Once again, we would like to thank each of you for the vital work you are doing during this unprecedented time in our province. Please feel free to contact any member of your Bargaining Committee if you have questions or concerns about COVID-19 and the situation in your workplace.

To keep informed with SGEU Health Provider information, please download our SGEU Health Sector App (<https://www.sgeuhealthproviders.org/health-sector-app>), follow us on Facebook @SGEUHealthProviders, or visit www.SGEU.org.

In Solidarity,

SGEU Health Providers Bargaining Committee

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