

October 13, 2022

HEABC and Facilities Bargaining Association ratify three-year agreement

HEABC and the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) have ratified a three-year agreement for the period April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2025. HEABC and the FBA reached a tentative agreement on September 1, 2022 under the province's Shared Recovery Mandate for 2022 public sector bargaining. The agreement supports the priorities of preserving sustainable services and maintaining operational/management flexibility.

Some highlights of the agreement are:

- General wage increases for all employees effective the first pay period after:
 - April 1, 2022 \$0.25 per hour and then 3.24%
 - April 1, 2023 5.5% + up to 1.25% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)
 - April 1, 2024 2.0% + up to 1% COLA
- A commitment to advance Indigenous specific anti-racism initiatives, including improving provisions regarding Indigenous employee rights and cultural practices, leave entitlements, and recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees. The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation will be included as an additional statutory holiday.
- Increases to shift premiums intended to improve staffing during evenings, nights and weekends in support of improved services, and improved consultation processes.
- Implementation of payment or reimbursement for some expenses resulting from required continues of employment: Trades and Industrial Safety Protective Footwear, Criminal Record Check, FOODSAFE Level I Refresher Course, and Registration and License Fees.
- Article 16.01(c): Employers can fill vacancies of less than 15 calendar days with casual or float pool positions. Previously, vacancies of any duration were subject to 16.01(c).
- A Wage Comparability Working Group will be formed to identify wage comparability issues, allocate a fund to provide wage adjustments to address comparability issues during the 2022-2025 Collective Agreement, and to provide recommendations to Government to prepare for the renewal of the 2022-2025 Collective Agreement.
- The parties will further workload discussions in the Regional Workload Committees, including discussing best practice tools to respond to workload and local directives on work prioritization. Additionally, the FBA straight time paid hours will increase by 9,250,000 hours over the 2021 calendar year total, by December 31, 2024, inclusive of casual and regular status hours.
- The Ministry of Health will create a joint consultation forum with the Provincial Health Human Resources Coordination Centre (PHHRCC) and health sector bargaining associations to seek feedback on evolution and implementation of the Provincial Health Human Resource (HHR) Strategy, including equity and diversity in the workforce and on strategies or actions to support the retention of the workforce, including mental health and wellness.

- The parties agreed to a number of occupational health and safety provisions including the following:
 - Clarification on the duties and functions of Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOHSC) and worker health and safety representatives, including supporting psychologically healthy and safe workplaces, ability to request information and ability to make recommendations.
 - Employers will consult with the Union(s) when making a proposal to WorkSafeBC for a JOHSC variation.
 - Employers will provide appropriate violence prevention refresher training. When an employee requests violence prevention refresher training, the Employer shall approve such requests where deemed appropriate.
 - Employers must have a policy to address sexual and domestic violence at the workplace.
 - Employers shall communicate their adoption of the Psychological Health & Safety Standard (existing language) to further promote psychologically healthy and safe working conditions and practices.
 - An information sharing forum to be established when a public health emergency, that creates a health risk for a significant number of employees, is declared by the Government of BC.

“We are very pleased to have finalized a new collective agreement with the Facilities Bargaining Association which includes fair wage increases and measures to address staffing and workload challenges, and other commitments that will both improve conditions for employees and provide better services for patients, clients and residents of BC’s health care system,” said HEABC President & CEO Michael McMillan.

About the FBA

Led by the Hospital Employees’ Union (HEU), which represents approximately 93 per cent of the FBA’s 60,000 members, the Facilities subsector collective agreement covers employees who provide support services in various settings including hospitals and residential care homes throughout BC.

Care Aides are the largest classification group in this subsector, making up approximately one-third of the bargaining association. Care Aides provide non-clinical care for hospital patients and extended care home residents, and are an important part of integrated care teams.

The current Health Services & Support Facilities Subsector Association Collective Agreement expired on March 31, 2022. However, the terms and conditions of the current collective agreement remain in effect until the parties ratify a new collective agreement.

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