

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

MEETING NOTE

Cliff #: 65280

Date: June 7 2023

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Harry Bains, Minister of Labour

DATE AND TIME OF MEETING: June 14, 2023, at 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm

ATTENDEES: Brian Gardiner; Andrea Duncan, Component 3 Vice-President, Community Social Services; Judy Fox-McGuire, Component 6 Vice-President, Social, Information and Health; Scott DeLong, Component 8 Vice-President, Community Health Services; Shannon Murray, Executive Director; Trevor Hughes, Deputy Minister.

ISSUE(S): Expansion of mental disorder presumption to other occupations.

BACKGROUND: The BCGEU represents thousands of members in health care, community social services, education, highways maintenance, casinos, credit unions, municipalities, regional districts and other employers. About a third of the BCGEU's membership works in the direct government service.

In recent years, the BCGEU has raised concerns to the Minister of Labour about BCGEU workers who regularly face the risk of psychological and physical injury on the job but are not covered by the mental disorder presumption under the *Workers Compensation Act* for specified occupations.

The Minister met with the BCGEU in April 2021 and in April 2023, regarding the request by the BCGEU to expand the list of occupations eligible for the mental health presumption. The Minister acknowledged the need to look at other sectors for this presumption, because certain professions are more likely to experience trauma on the job that can lead to a mental disorder. It was indicated during these meetings that a review of the issue is ongoing, but also noted that workers who develop mental disorders from their work may be eligible for workers' compensation even without access to the presumption.

DISCUSSION:

As of May 2023, the BCGEU has outstanding requests for extending the presumption to the following occupations/lines of work: mental health and addictions workers; outreach workers; shelter workers; transition house workers; front line social workers; and front line employment assistance workers.

s.12; s.13

SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:

- *I can assure you that Government is committed to greater protections for workers who experience trauma in their job.*
- *The Ministry of Labour is actively working on developing criteria to evaluate outstanding requests from stakeholders, including the BCGEU, for expansion of the presumption to other eligible occupations.*
- *The ministry intends to engage key stakeholders over the coming months, including the BCGEU, on proposed criteria and on any adding other eligible occupations to the presumption.*
- *I look forward to the BCGEU participating in this consultation and providing its perspective.*

ATTACHMENTS: s.12; s.13

s.12; s.13

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Page 3 of 3

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.12 ; s.13