

Letters of Expectations (Topic Guide 1655) - 110901

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Please forward subject matter questions to your Team Leads. All other content enquiries can be directed to the Knowledge Management team at BCPSA.HRKnowledgeManagement@gov.bc.ca.

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1. Subject Overview

Letters of Expectations are forward-looking, non-disciplinary documents that outline future expectations of an employee, rather than address past conduct or performance.

A Letter of Expectation can fulfil two functions:

1. Provide a clear outline of the employer's expectations for an employee in a new position.
2. Ensure clarity in situations where a supervisor believes that an employee has conducted him/herself in a manner that is not acceptable because he/she is unclear about the employer's expectations. A Letter of Expectations establishes that the employer is aware of what is expected of him/her - if similar conduct is repeated after receiving the letter, it can then be used in support of future discipline.

A true Letter of Expectations is not disciplinary in nature and therefore is not grievable under Article 10.5(a) of the BCGEU Master Agreement and Article 10.02(a) of the Extension to the PEA Master Agreement.

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2. Frequently Asked Questions

EMPLOYEES MAY ASK:

Question (a): [Can I have a Letter of Expectations removed from my personnel files?](#)

Answer: No, because a Letter of Expectations is not disciplinary in nature.

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Question (b): [I am not a new employee and have received a Letter of Expectations. I do not believe I should have received the letter and am unhappy about it. What can I do?](#)

Answer: There should be contact information in the Letter of Expectations your supervisor or manager gave you. You should contact that person if you have any questions or concerns.

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MANAGERS MAY ASK:

Question (c): When can a Letter of Expectations be used?

Answer: A Letter of Expectations can be used when an employee starts work in a new position, and if done as a standard part of an orientation process, can give the employee written confirmation of such things as hours of work, work schedules, conduct in the workplace.

A Letter of Expectations can also be used at any point in time when clarification of workplace expectations is required for an employee

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Question (d): How should the Letter of Expectations be written?

Answer: The tone of a Letter of Expectations should be positive and should **not**:

- ~ Contain language that refers to warnings or consequences for failing to comply with expectations
- ~ Contain any reference to a specific performance issue or incident of alleged wrongdoing

A Letter of Expectations containing such references could be considered disciplinary in nature and thus become grievable.

NOTE TO HR SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE: Managers trying to determine whether their situation is of a disciplinary nature or not should be redirected to an HR Advisor. An HR Advisor can help determine if a Letter of Expectations is appropriate and can also take them through the process of how to write the letter.

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Question (e): Are there any preliminary steps that should be taken prior to using a Letter of Expectation?

Answer: Yes. Typically, you would meet with an employee to verbally discuss the expectations for the workplace. The Letter of Expectations then provides written confirmation or clarification of those same expectations. There is no need to refer to any prior meeting(s) of this nature in the Letter of Expectation. The meeting should not be disciplinary, it is operational in nature and thus representation for the employee is not required.

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Question (f): Where is a Letter of Expectations kept?

Answer: The original letter is provided to the employee, a copy of the letter is kept on the employee's personnel file, and a copy is retained by the writer or supervisor. A Letter of Expectations is not considered disciplinary in nature, so it remains on the personnel file and cannot be removed at the request of the employee.

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Question (g): Should I use a Letter of Expectations if I want to address a specific area of work performance that needs improvement with an employee?

Answer: Yes, but bear in mind that when a specific area of an employee's performance needs to be corrected, you may also need to establish and provide the employee with a **Performance Management Plan** in a separate letter (see [Performance: Performance Management Plans Topic Guide](#)).

A performance management plan addresses an area of the employee's performance that needs to be corrected. The plan establishes date, or multiple dates (as appropriate), for reviewing progress in the plan. There should be an objective to be achieved as part of the plan, so there should also be an indication of how progress will be measured to determine if the objective has been achieved. Addition points to note about a performance management plan:

- ~ The tone of the letter should be encouraging and positive; indicate the support the employer is prepared to provide to assist the employee, including training
- ~ Although the tone of the letter is positive and encouraging, the letter needs to be clear about possible outcomes if the employee does not meet the standards established
- ~ The letter should indicate who the employee can contact if they have any questions related to the contents of the letter
- ~ The original letter should be provided to the employee, with a copy going into their personnel file.

You may need to provide the employee with both a Letter of Expectations and a performance management plan; contact an HR Advisor to determine what the best solution to your situation is.

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3. What to Ask and When to Forward/Redirect

Questions you may need to ask the customer to ensure there is enough information to respond to their query:

- ~ Is it a specific area of the employees work performance you are wishing to address? (If the answer is yes, the customer should use a performance management plan, not a Letter of Expectations.)

- ~ Has this been discussed with the employee before or is the first time that it will be raised?
- ~ Are you trying to prepare a Letter of Expectations? (If the answer is yes, redirect immediately to an HR Advisor.)

Redirect to the HR Advisor when:

- ~ The customer is trying to determine whether the matter is of a disciplinary nature or not.
- ~ The customer needs help preparing a Letter of Expectations.

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4. General Guidance

For HR Advisors:

To help the customer understand how to keep a Letter of Expectation from appearing disciplinary in tone and nature, you should discuss with them the essential elements of a Letter of Expectations. The specifics will vary, but there are critical elements that need to be used to ensure that the letter is written correctly:

- ~ The introductory paragraph should set out the purpose of the letter which is to communicate, identify or clarify what behaviour or conduct is expected in the performance of the employee's role.
- ~ Do not refer to the employee who the letter is addressed to; keep the letter generic and refer to the expectations as applying all employees in the worksite (i.e. "Employees are expected to..." not, "You are expected to...").
- ~ Do not refer to any prior meeting or specific event; this could render the letter disciplinary in nature.
- ~ Do not reference discipline that could result if these expectations are not met.
- ~ The tone of the letter should be encouraging and positive; indicate the support the employer is prepared to provide to assist the employee, including training.
- ~ The letter should indicate who the employee can contact if they have any questions related to the contents of the letter.
- ~ The original letter should be provided to the employee, and copies to the supervisor and personnel file.

5. Additional Links

NOTE: It is mandatory for us to offer assistance to customers in navigating the websites when we provide links to them.

Links to sites with open access:

(All customers should be able to access these sites)

Employment Conditions & Agreements on MyHR

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/content_hub.page?ContentID=bb0bd9ec-e423-57d8-80bc-39b1aaac8d97

BCGEU Master Agreement

Please see Article:

- ~ 10.5(a) - Right to Grieve other Disciplinary Action

PEA Master and Subsidiary Agreements

Please see Article:

- ~ 10.02(a) - Disciplinary Action

HR Policy #9 - Standards of Conduct

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/article.page?ContentID=45bf7662-adf9-8a5f-74f1-657fedd69edf>

Links to sites with secure access:

(Customers may have restricted access to these sites. New employees may have to wait up to 2 weeks for access to these sites)

N/A

6. Related Content

[Access to Employment Information and Employment Records Topic Guide](#)

[Comparative Letter of Expectations: Teamwork Reference Guide](#)

[Letter of Expectations Generic Template 1 Reference Guide](#)

[Letter of Expectations Generic Template 2 Reference Guide](#)

[Performance: Performance Management Topic Guide](#)

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DATE

Hand Delivered

EMPLOYEE NAME
ADDRESS
MINISTRY

Dear: EMPLOYEE NAME:

Re: Letter of Expectation

The purpose of this letter is to communicate to you my expectations with respect to your duties and responsibilities related to your regular full time position as a TITLE within the BRANCH/MINISTRY. If after reading this letter you have any questions or comments, I would be pleased to discuss them in greater detail with you. It is my belief that if we share a common understanding of these key areas, it will greatly assist both our working relationship and our ability to deliver quality service to our clients and each other.

Duties

Your duties include:

[List responsibilities, job functions of employee]

Hours of Work

It is expected that all employees working are consistent with work habits and schedules. The hours you have been scheduled to work are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday with a forty-three minute lunch and two 15-minute rest periods. This entitles you to a modified day every second week, currently scheduled on Friday.

The expectation is that you arrive at the office on time, ready to work, at the start of the working day. You are expected to attend work regularly and maintain a level of physical and mental health that will enable you to perform the duties of your job effectively.

STIIP

All employees have an obligation to attend work regularly each week and maintain a level of physical and mental health that will enable them to perform the duties of their jobs effectively. In Accordance with 1.7 of Appendix 4 of the Master Agreement, you are required to phone your supervisor or manager by TIME when you will not be at work because of illness or injury. You are expected to identify when you think you will return to the office, and confirm a return date in advance of your return to work.

When you are unable to attend work due to illness or injury, it is your responsibility to provide satisfactory evidence of a medical disability that renders you incapable of working in any capacity during the time you are away.

MODIFY OR DELETE TO SUIT YOUR SITUATION. It is expected that you continue to provide a doctor's certificate (STO 2) for each absence from work due to illness or injury, in accordance with Appendix 4, Article 1.4. Leave forms need to be completed, or Time and Leave records updated no later than two days after your return to work from being absent due to illness.

Workplace Behavior

Attached for your information is a copy of the brochure "Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees." The brochure outlines the high standards of conduct expected of all government employees to ensure a positive and productive workplace. If you have any questions regarding the Standards of Conduct, please contact me to discuss.

You are expected to demonstrate a cooperative and willing attitude at all times. Your conduct in the workplace must meet acceptable social standards and must contribute to a positive work environment. Colleagues are to be treated with respect and dignity.

You will show team cooperation with co-workers, your supervisor and other employees within the Branch. You are expected to demonstrate initiative in carrying out your day-to-day responsibilities.

You are also expected to exercise mature judgment; demonstrate tact and professionalism; be able to work independently and to conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your authority and responsibility, and in accordance with the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees.

Effectiveness and Communication

It is expected that employees carry out assigned responsibilities in an accurate and effective manner. You are also expected to carry out my instructions regarding fulfilling assigned tasks within ministry and government policies, procedures and regulations. If you are unsure or disagree with any instruction, it is expected that you discuss or initiate discussions regarding these instructions with me or your supervisor. Such conversations are to reflect the work place behaviour set out in the Standards of Conduct for the Public Service Employees. It is your responsibility to ensure you understand the instructions given.

It is also an expectation of employees to assess and adjust priorities to respond to deadlines and service demands appropriately. If you are unsure of your priorities, it is expected that you will seek clarification from me or your supervisor. Further expectations require you to accept and meet scheduled deadlines or changes to previous deadlines as directed.

The expectation is that you have the ability to work under the pressure of administrative requirements and workload demands. You are required to exercise sound decision-making, implement good short term planning and seek direction where necessary.

It is expected that communication will be open, direct, honest, accurate and reflects the work place behaviour set out in the Standards of Conduct for the Public Service Employees.

I wish to assist you in every way possible to meet these expectations and be successful in your role as **TITLE**. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these expectations, please feel free to discuss them with me at any time.

Yours truly,

MANAGER NAME
TITLE

Pc: Personnel File
NAME, Human Resources Consultant, BCPSA



DATE

NAME
ADDRESS

Dear:

Re: Letter of Expectations

The purpose of this letter is to communicate the ministry's expectations with respect to work assignments, hours of work, overtime, travel, and communication as it relates to your position as XX with the X Branch, in the Ministry of XXX. If after reading this letter you have any questions or comments, I would be pleased to discuss them in greater detail with you.

Work Assignments

As X, I will be your supervisor and will be responsible for providing direction and instruction to you in the areas of work assignments, standards, measures and project deadlines. If you are unsure with any direction or assignment, please ask me for clarification. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the instructions and directions given to you. If you are unsure or disagree with any direction, it is my expectation that you will discuss or initiate discussions regarding these instructions with me.

Hours of Work, Overtime, and Travel

Your hours of work are X am – X pm Monday to Friday. Any requests for changes to your schedule must be pre-approved by me. Should the need for overtime arise, you must receive my approval in advance of working any overtime hours. Travel requests must also be approved of well in advance of the proposed travel dates.

Communication

It is expected that all communication will be open, direct, respectful, honest and accurate. It is expected that you understand and stay within your levels of authority and responsibility. If you are unsure about these levels, please seek clarification from me. As your position is within the Deputy Minister's office it is expected that your behaviour is always at the highest level of professionalism and is never in contravention with the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees. Teamwork, cooperation and respect to colleagues, management, and the general public is expected at all times.

To ensure that you continue to understand and meet these expectations, a regularly scheduled meeting will be held with you. These meetings will be scheduled weekly starting XX at X in the morning to review weekly work assignment accomplishments and other work assignments that you are currently doing.

Sincerely,

SUPERVISOR NAME AND TITLE

p.c.:

DATE

EMPLOYEE

Re: Letter of Expectation

Dear EMPLOYEE:

Our organization is undergoing a tremendous amount of transition and change, and the values and competencies associated with working in a team are critical during this time. To ensure clarity and success in meeting our goals, we are issuing this letter of expectation.

Employees in our Ministry are expected to:

- Demonstrate professional, respectful behaviour through the appropriate use of words, tone and body language
- Present themselves positively as part of a team for our branch and our division
- Conversations both inside and outside the team should build trust and promote the team as a whole
- Work positively with team members to contribute to the organization working its way through any challenges
- Build trust with their colleagues
- Support management and Ministry decisions and work positively to implement them
- Provide feedback to management in a private setting that promotes exchange of ideas and understanding.
- Raise constructive ideas and take action to help build a new organization that all division employees are proud to be a part of

We are confident that employees will work together to achieve success as we move through these challenging times.

Should you have any questions related these expectations, please do not hesitate to meet with me to discuss them.

Sincerely,

SIGNATORY

Pc xxxx