



Ref: 63519

September 8, 2022

Tim Dunford
Board Chair
School District 63
c/o Shannon Davies
Email: sdavies@saanichschools.ca

Dear Tim Dunford:

Thank you for your letter of June 3, 2022, regarding recent changes to the new paid sick leave entitlement and your request to be reimbursed for the costs required to implement this new entitlement.

As you are aware, effective January 1, 2022, employees covered by the *Employment Standards Act* (Act) are entitled to up to five days of employer-paid leave for personal illness and injury per year.

As of March 31, 2022, the Act was amended to provide that:

- the five-day entitlement is per “calendar year,” including calendar year 2022, and
- the minimum entitlement of five days per calendar year applies to all eligible unionized employees, whether or not the paid sick leave provisions in their collective agreement “meet or exceed” the provisions under the Act.

The Government information bulletin providing more information respecting these amendments can be found at: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022LBR0005-000432>.

Paid sick leave is an important way to reduce workplace transmission of illness and it ensures that employees will not have to choose between going to work sick or losing pay. The enhancements made in March simplify the administration process for employers and strengthen the protection for workers.

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Before establishing the paid sick leave entitlement, Government engaged in significant public consultations with employers and employees. Through this process I heard concerns from employers regarding the financial implications associated with implementing paid sick leave, including suggestions to reimburse employers for these costs. While the Ministry of Labour does not have a funding program to cover the additional costs required for employers to implement this new entitlement, paid sick leave will benefit employers through increased productivity and reduced workplace transmission of illness. In this way, paid sick leave supports both workers and employers.

Thank you again for writing and I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Bains', with a horizontal line underneath.

Harry Bains
Minister

pc: Honourable Jennifer Whiteside
Minister of Education