

Distribution of this Bulletin

Please ensure this bulletin is circulated to all administrative staff in both the district office and schools who must rely on the collective agreement in the performance of their duties.

G.6 Leave for Union Business — Including Employer Health Tax in Billing

Article G.6.2 of the Provincial Collective Agreement between BCPSEA and the BCTF states as follows:

The local or BCTF shall reimburse the board for 100 per cent of such salary, benefits, pension contributions and all other contribution costs upon receipt of a monthly statement.

A question has arisen as to whether districts can include a portion of the Employer Health Tax as part of “all other contribution costs” in the billing to the local union or the BCTF. BCPSEA has received a legal opinion on this issue and we have determined that more analysis is required prior to providing advice.

To ensure we fully understand all aspects of this issue, we are talking with the BC Association of School Business Officials to identify relevant considerations for districts and will follow up with further information.

New Employment Insurance Parental Leave-Sharing Benefit

Effective March 17, 2019, employees will be eligible to apply for the federal government’s new Employment Insurance (EI) parental leave-sharing benefit. The purpose of the sharing benefit is to encourage two-parent families to share the time off work required to care for a newborn and/or newly adopted child.

Under the new benefit:

- Parents who have selected to take the standard 35-week duration of parental leave benefit may now share up to 40 weeks’ benefits. Neither parent can receive more than 35 weeks’ benefits.
- Parents who have selected the extended 61-week duration of parental leave benefits may now share up to 69 weeks. Neither parent can receive more than 61 weeks’ benefits.

Both parents must elect the same duration over which parental leave EI benefits are paid.

The new benefit **does not** affect districts’ collective agreement obligations to individual new parents. There is **no change** to the total period of pregnancy and/or parental leave to which individual employees are entitled under the *Employment Standards Act*.

There is [no change](#) to the amount of top-up or supplemental employment benefits (SEBs) paid by a district to employees on pregnancy and/or parental leave.¹

The additional shared benefit is available to parents of children born or placed for adoption on or after March 17, 2019.

More information is available here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental.html>

Questions

Please contact your BCPSEA [labour relations liaison](#) if you have any questions.

¹ The amount of top-up/SEB paid to teachers selecting an extended duration of EI parental leave benefits was resolved by a 2018 settlement agreement with the BCTF, which we communicated in [@issue No. 2018-01](#). It affects only the 10 districts that provide parental leave top-up/SEB: SDs 36 (Surrey), 51 (Boundary), 61 (Greater Victoria), 63 (Saanich), 69 (Qualicum), 70 (Alberni), 72 (Campbell River), 73 (Kamloops/Thompson), 75 (Mission) and 79 (Cowichan Valley). There are no support staff agreements that provide parental leave top-up.