

## BC's NDP Government Establishes First-Ever Permanent Paid Sick Leave For BC Workers



Local 230 Members Attend Sick Pay Rally, October 27, 2021

There are about 179 countries around the world that offer some kind of paid sick leave benefit, 127 of these offer at least one week each year, and 98 offer more than a week. There doesn't seem to be a normal way to calculate the benefits, some are based on rate of pay and every hour a person works, while others require 30-40 hours in a week to earn a credit towards time away.

No matter how it's calculated, paid sick leave can reduce employee turnover, increase productivity, and reduce the spread of disease in the workplace and in the community. Naturally, paying workers when they are not working due to illness costs money that could be used for other purposes, but paid sick leave often results in an overall reduction of the common cold and flu in the community, which is worth the costs. While the C-19 Pandemic is still in plain view,

and after 18 months of fear, frustration and loneliness, many have anxiety of our personal health, as well as our friends and family's health. The C-19 global pandemic has changed millions of lives in an incredibly negative and tragic way.

Having to choose between paying rent and bills, or going to work sick knowing you will infect your coworkers and patrons, shouldn't be a decision workers should have to make. Joining countries around the world with a form of sick pay just makes sense.

Some, businesses will say, "it's not the right time," "it's too rich," or "they will have to close their doors." I say, this is the direct result of twenty years of BC Liberal wage and worker rights suppression. Remember the \$6 Training Wage, regressive Employment Standards Act, "Self-Help Kits,"

and Labour Relations Board changes to make it harder to establish a union in your workplace. All of these things were designed to reduce income, while expenses continued to grow, weakening the shrinking middle class in B.C.

Sick leave is a humanitarian action for a civil, just, and progressive society. All Canadians need Sick Pay as patchwork to begin to bring us back to an empathetic environment, where we don't have to make "choices" that workers can't afford to make in the first place.

Monday, October 25th marked the end of the ability for British Columbians to weigh in on the survey to help build a better BC for workers, and we needed to bring some attention to the end with a rally.

The following people attended the rally at the legislature for Paid Sick Leave in British Columbia:

**Greg Gyorfi**, President  
**Adrien Livingston**, W-JETS ED/  
Local 230 Treasurer  
**Emilie Lane**, W-JETS employee  
**Cory McGregor**, ABM  
**Martin Kleiner**, WATT Instructor  
several **WATT** students  
and myself, **Phil Venoit**, BM

Effective January 1, 2022, the first ever permanent paid sick leave comes into effect with 5 paid sick days each year. Both full-time and part-time employees are eligible for this benefit. This is a big win for all workers in BC and Local 230 members. We're on the front lines all the way.

### Volume 3: 2021

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### Member's Dues Auto-Deposit

To send dues payments via e-Transfer, just email [dues@ibew230.org](mailto:dues@ibew230.org)

Remember to include your name and IBEW \*card number in the e-Transfer "message" section

\*Note: your card number is printed on your yellow dues receipt

### News and Notes

Due to multiple variants of COVID-19 and increased cases, our office doors remain locked to reduce the risk of transmission through the office. Our staff continue to work regular hours and are able to assist you by phone, by email, or in-person outside our office doors. Please note that we require you to wear a mask and be sure to dress accordingly for the weather if you plan on visiting either office.

**Holiday Closure:** Our office will be closing on December 24th, 2021 at 12:00pm and reopen on Tuesday, January 4th, 2022 at 8:00am.

#### Upcoming Training:

Dec 18/21	Code Update	Online
Jan 8/22 - Jan 9/22	Residential Wiring	In-Person
Jan 28/22 - Jan 29/22	Fiber Optic	In-Person

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# Business Manager's Report



Phil Venoit, Business Manager/Financial Secretary

## COVID-19 & MANDATORY VACCINATION POLICIES

The next phase of COVID-19 disruptions to our not-so-normal lives are the new mandatory C-19 vaccination requirements popping up everywhere. On October 6th, the Government of Canada announced federal public service employees must be fully vaccinated by November 15th, 2021, or be placed on administrative leave without pay. This requirement impacts our members at Fleet Maintenance Facility in Esquimalt, Rocky Point, and Nanoose. It also affects our marine contractors who work at federal facilities like Emery Electric and Exell Power, and other employers like Victoria Shipyard who work at the dockyard. The Graving Dock in Esquimalt has also fallen under the same mandate. The vaccination requirement applies to all federally regulated transportation employees including air, rail and marine transportation sectors. Telecommunications and banking is expected to follow with mandates in 2022.

Many municipal, provincial and private sector construction clients have announced they will be following the same vaccination requirements. For example, CRD, VIHA, cities of Victoria and Saanich, UVic, and Harmac have already implemented policies. Several large general contractors have introduced mandatory vaccination as well (Ellis Don and PCL) requiring their sub-trades to comply by having only vaccinated workers on their job sites. Some of our contractors are considering implementing their own policy in this regard; however, to date, I have only seen one who primarily works in the service sector.

The Local Union does not have a policy in this regard, but we will have to comply with those contractors who require full vaccination. Our construction agreement is clear, to dispatch only "acceptable" workers. This means

if non-vaccinated workers are not permitted on a job site, they will be considered unacceptable by the contractor.

Finally, in the event a non-vaccinated worker is placed on administrative leave, or laid off due to their decision to not get vaccinated, they will likely receive no employment insurance. This was determined using the Act, which loosely states a worker must lose their employment through no fault of their own. Vaccination is a personal decision, but like all personal decisions, they come with consequences and these are clearly the fall-out by not adhering to what the health professionals have been saying from the beginning. They've told us we need to develop and inject vaccines into the vast majority of the population to build herd immunity, or sit back and watch a larger chunk of the world's population die unnecessarily. I know some of our members have deep-seated fears about the vaccination itself and how it will impact their health in one way or another. I get that, and I feel for you. This is no hoax though, and if that is what's driving you away from getting vaccinated, you should seek out advice from another source.

COVID-19 is a real concern and has taken millions of lives. Governments around the world are realizing at this point there is only one way we can slow the spread, and that is through a campaign resulting in global vaccination. Nearly 90% are vaccinated in BC.

The Executive Board and I are looking to find the right time to reinstate our Unit Meetings. Every month we consider infection and hospitalization rates, the death toll, and now the new Omicron variant. All are cause for concern at this point.

We turn to the guidance of the Provincial Health Officer, Health Minister, and International Vice-President for the decision monthly. On January 20th, 2022, I will be providing an online summary of what the Local and Executive Board have been working on and acting upon over the past year and a half. After that, I will be providing the membership with monthly updates until we return to Regular Meetings. Regardless of how and when we return to Unit Meetings, members will be required to be fully vaccinated, masked unless speaking and seated, and for everyone's personal safety, remain six feet apart. Anyone who decides to interject their own personal campaign on COVID and disrupts a Meeting will be introduced to the Constitution and ejected from the Unit Meeting for disrupting its harmony. We are professionals at work and need to conduct ourselves in the same safe and considerate manner at our meetings.

We had four BC Building Trades Bargaining Council - CLRA Construction Overtime Committee Meetings as mandated by the BC Labour Relations Board from their mediated decision concluding our last round of construction bargaining in 2018. This month, I put them on notice that we have had nothing more than anecdotal evidence from them and that this has been nothing more than a lark with the purpose to take money out of our member's pockets and put them in CLRA contractor's profits. This has been a foolhardy bullshit experiment with no benefit in extra work for our membership, and they needed to provide some significant hard evidence before May, 2022 or the IBEW is checking out of the process and putting the Labour Board and our BC Government on notice. We had scheduled our next meeting for October 20th, 2021 and they pulled a no-show.

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) Board of Directors reached out to talk to me a few months ago to discuss several issues impacting apprenticeship today. I took them back to the reasons why I got involved with the Maritime Sector Advisory Group six years ago: to advocate for the return of compulsory (skilled trades) certification for several trades; to push the ITA into developing and demanding mandatory asbestos awareness education early within the apprenticeship curriculum; and finally, to use the position to pull the Advanced Education Ministry onside to build BC Ferries ships in BC as concrete proof the Provincial Government believes in marine based apprenticeships through real jobs and opportunities for BC's youth.

The same opportunities in provincial shipbuilding that I received fresh out of high-school forty years ago, should exist for today's youth. The wrong-headed practice of sending projects to Romania, Germany, Poland and any other country does an incredible disservice to British Columbians who want to pursue a career in the shipbuilding industry. We are a nation surrounded by three of the planet's oceans and we allowed the BC Liberals to pretend that wasn't important! We were political collateral damage and must right that 20-year mistake. There were other items I forwarded like the horrific I.P. fail rates in BC over the past year and a half due at least in part to online schooling. I believe one of the five exams have been pulled from the test bank last month.

Finally, in organizing, we would like to welcome the Sustainable Projects Group (SPG) signing on to the construction collective agreement in BC. They have offices out east as well as the three most western provinces and will be putting four of our members to work on some maintenance jobs in Victoria.



# NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

This September 30th, 2021 marked the first year of officially recognizing National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day honours the survivors of the residential school system, their families, friends, and communities, as well as all the children and victims lost. The day serves as a time to reflect on what has happened in this country and to help Canadians recognize the colonial legacy left by residential schools. Public recognition helps deepen our collective awareness and is vital to the ongoing reconciliation process.

The "holiday" is intended to be a date of reflection where the memories of survivors are honoured and to commemorate those lost to the brutality and abuse of residential schools. We bear witness to the healing journey of the survivors and their families and we do what we can to create a harmonious and diverse Canadian cultural landscape.

September 30th began as Orange Shirt Day and originates from the story of Phyllis Webstad from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation. Phyllis told her story of her first day at St. Joseph's Residential School in Williams Lake, BC when she wore her new orange shirt, only to have it taken from her. She was only a six-year-old girl and would never get to see the shirt her grandmother bought for her first day ever again. Phyllis spoke publicly about her experience for the first time on September 30th, 2013, thus initiating Orange Shirt Day. This day has opened doors to global conversation on all aspects of residential

schools and colonialism. Many organizations are taking the day as an opportunity to create meaningful discussion and actions regarding the effects of residential schools and the legacy they have left behind. These organizations may have developed their own symbolism within their orange shirt design. Local 230 sought out the artwork on our shirts by Indigenous artist Michelle Stoney, an Emily Carr student, who in turn donated the commission to a local charity. The date September 30th, was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were forcefully taken from their homes to attend residential schools. They day is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year.

It is also an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools, communities and organizations like the IBEW to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come.



**Local 230's office staff commemorating National Truth & Reconciliation Day with Local 230 orange shirts designed by Indigenous Artist, Michelle Stoney**

This statutory holiday means federally regulated sectors will observe this national day. This new holiday is recognized by many of our collective agreements.

**Recognized immediately:** City of Victoria, all Motor Winding shops, Royal Jubilee Hospital, Allied – Hydro Council Agreement.

**Open to discussion/currently in discussion:** Westburne Wholesale, and CLRA.

**No provision or contemplated process:** Victoria Shipyard, VI Southern Railway.

## DELEGATE TO THE DOCKYARDS TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL



**Brother Jonathan G. at FMF, Dockyard**

Congratulations to Brother, Jonathan G. Electronics Technician (standing beside a Thales SMART-S 3D long range radar,) for taking on the new role as Delegate to the Dockyard Trades and Labour Council and being appointed as Treasurer to the Council.

## CONVENTION DELEGATE VOTE

On June 28th we had Judge of the Ballot Chris B., Tellers Krysta B. and Janko U., and Sargent of Arms Kale A. conduct the IBEW International Convention Delegation vote count. Congratulations to Brothers Cory McGregor, Raj Takhar, and Sister Jackie Oliver for having the three highest votes, and therefore joining President Gyrofi and I to attend the 40th IBEW International Convention next May, in whichever form it takes. As a side note, Brother Shane Scott is the 1st alternate. I would also like to thank those of you who put your names forward and all the members who took out the time to cast their vote.



**Convention Delegate Vote Officials**

**Judge of the Ballot:** Chris B.  
**Tellers:** Krysta B., and Janko U.



# Congratulations to our new Red Seal Electricians!



**Top-left:** Levi R., Wyatt M.

**Middle-left:** Wesley B., Alana H., Ilya F.-R.

**Bottom-left:** Lance D., Noah E., Wyatt G.