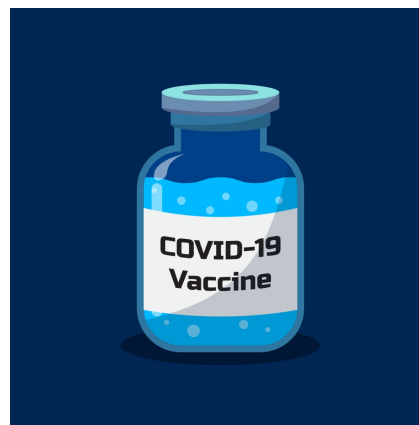


Employer Quarterly news & updates

November 2021 | Issue 7

Vaccinations in the Workplace



Recently we posed the following question to an Industrial Relations Officer with Employment Standards Branch: ***“Can an employer stipulate the COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment for a new hire and/or for current employees when the PHO doesn’t mandate it for the industry/sector?”***

Below is the reply:

The question about employers requiring vaccination is a complicated one. One of this problems is that this question raises legal issues independent of the Employment Standards Act (ESA). We encourage parties to carry out their own due diligence to best understand the full potential legal ramifications of mandatory vaccines within an employment context. An employer’s ability to terminate an employee who fails or refuses to get vaccinated, as a condition of employment, needs to be understood and analyzed in light of other authorities which either purport to permit or prohibit the employer’s ability in this regard.

The ESA does not set out how an employer manages its operations, except in clear prescribed areas (minimum standards for hours of work, wages, payment of wages, etc.). The areas of law below may also impact an employer’s ability to require vaccinations and/or proof of vaccination:

- *Any Public Health Orders (PHO)*
- *Health & safety considerations and/or requirements (WorkSafe)*
- *Human Rights Legislation*

- *Privacy legislation and/or general privacy considerations*
- *Common Law (i.e., employment law beyond the ESA)*

*There are two sections of the ESA that are relevant: **Section 63**, which is related to termination and **Section 66**, which is related to the Director determining employment has been terminated due to altering conditions of employment.*

The Industrial Relations Officer also encouraged us to emphasize that employers need to consider the full potential legal ramifications and not just look at these sections of the ESA in isolation.

The [WorksafeBC](#) website is also a source to review with regards to Communicative Disease in the workplace.

Canada Recovery Hiring Program

The [Canada Recovery Hiring Program](#) will be available until May 7, 2022, for eligible employers with current revenue losses greater than 10% when compared to the baseline period of March 14 – April 10, 2021. The subsidy rate is set at 50% of eligible payroll. Please be mindful of the deadlines to apply.

Unpaid Work Experience and Youth Program



Does your organization have a landscaping, trail building, or light construction project coming up in early 2022 that could provide work experience opportunities for 8–10 youth (ages 16–30)? The **BladeRunners** program is looking for organizations to partner with beginning February 2022 to provide short or long term placements. If you feel this could be a fit for an upcoming project please contact:

Anne Dodson, Manager Client Services & Programs
adodson@careercentre.org 250.248.3205 ext. 234

Small Business Week – Video Recording Available



Three info sessions for employers were hosted last month. The recordings for *Everyday Ways to be an Inclusive Employer* and Community Futures' FREE Business Coaching are available via the following links. To access the Employment Standards Q&A video, [please contact us](#).

[Link 1](#) – *Everyday Ways to be an Inclusive Employer*

[Link 2](#) – *Community Futures' FREE Business Coaching*

Did you attend? What's your feedback? Is noon a good time/bad time? What other topics would you like to cover? Should we do one session every couple of months or is 3 sessions in one week better? [Let us know!!](#)

Featured Article – Retention Strategies When Everyone is Hiring

“We are soooo short staffed” and *“I think you’re on mute”* are probably the two most spoken expressions for 2021. All jokes aside, the labour shortage, the skills gaps, the deafening echo of the “Boom, Bust Echo”, or whatever we want to call it, was predicted over 25 years ago. Simply put, there are now fewer people of working age in our population, and the changes in society as a result of the pandemic has intensified the impact this demographic shift has been having on our local labour market.

Perhaps ‘the great resignation’ hasn’t directly impacted your organization yet, but when survey after survey indicates that close to 20% of workers are thinking of voluntarily leaving their current job, we have to focus on strategies to keep the workers we have.

Flexibility: More than ever we are seeing how valued a flexible work schedule is to the workforce. “Work–life balance” or “work–life blend” are listed on job descriptions more and more right now. Childcare issues, 2nd part–time jobs, blended family schedules and other personal commitments, such as caring for aging parents, are all factors as to why an employee might be attracted by having flexibility in their work schedule. Providing flexibility is not a one size fits all offer for every worker and can best be determined by having an open conversation with each individual to determine what arrangement would entice them to stay.

Compensation: By now, you may have observed the radical compensation

leadership move of [Dan Price, CEO of Gravity Payments](#) or saw the media story about the corner store in [Christina Lake](#). We know not every business can accommodate these levels of compensation increases, however it is very feasible, and strongly encouraged, to conduct a full compensation review of your sector to ensure you are paying wages and benefits which are above average for the skills and productivity your business operations requires to be strategic.

Benefits: Benefits are typically rolled into the topic of compensation but perhaps they deserve their own category as workers are placing benefits higher up on the list of incentives. And by benefits, we are mostly referring to health and dental coverage. Again, not every organization can afford to step into a full group health plan, but then if you are unable to recruit new workers or retain current workers, then perhaps you can't afford NOT to consider how a health plan may be the incentive to offer in order to staff your operation. At the very least, consider the merits of providing health spend accounts which your team can access for dental expenses, chiropractor fees etc. Please be sure to review the CRA's [Private Health Service Plans](#) webpage and chat over the pros and cons of Health Spend accounts with your accountant.

Positive feedback: This one costs you pretty much nothing and it is challenging to think of a reason why this is not being done more frequently, in a meaningful and purposeful way "*75% of job successes are predicted by your levels of optimism, your social support and your ability to see stress as a challenge not a threat*" – Shawn Achor. This is more than just saying "thanks" at the end of the shift. Your team needs to know they are making a difference and that their efforts are appreciated. And not surprisingly, workers are more productive when this happens. Check out [The Happy Secret to Better Work](#). Achor's delivery is engaging and humorous and the content is impactful. By implementing the five activities he suggests, you stand a good chance of increasing happiness and productivity in your workplace.

Opportunity for advancement, social/community involvement and being heard are all factors workers are seeking in their employment relationships. More details and great tips to explore can be found via these 3 articles:

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/employees/manage/7-low-cost-ways-keep-employees-engaged>

[LinkedIn Report: What Candidates Want, What Companies Need, and What's Changing](#)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/canadian-wage-inflation-looms-perfect-storm-hits-labor-market-2021-10-28/>

Not sure where to start? Please give Lorrie Mohl, our Employer Services Coordinator a call at 250.248.3205 ext 236 to discuss any of the above strategies.

In our summer newsletter, we provided recruitment strategies for when everyone is hiring, and we'd be interested to know if you utilize any of those suggestions and how it turned out. [Let us know!](#)

Mental Health Support in the Workplace

Employers have contacted our office inquiring about mental health workshops or services for their employees. There are several online resources to access and to make available for your employees. Circulating information on mental health resources to your employees sends a message that your organization is making a commitment to them and their mental health needs.

<https://tourismhr.ca/covid-19/mental-health-support/>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/virtual-mental-health-supports#healthcare>

<https://safetyalliancebc.ca/workplace-mental-health/>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use>

Enhanced Wage Subsidy Program

The [WorkBC Wage Subsidy Program](#) provides support to employers to hire and provide on-the-job training for year-round full time positions. Currently, an employer can request up to 24 weeks of support for as many as 5 new hires at a time (10/year).



For details and eligibility please review the [Employer Application Guide](#).

Ready to hire? Ready to apply? [Start here!!](#)

***TIP:** Have your CRA #, WorksafeBC # a brief description of duties, the skills and duties normally required for the position and an outline of a training plan on hand when you are ready to fill in the online application. If you have identified the worker you intend to hire/re-hire, you will also need the worker's email address. The worker will automatically receive an email and will be prompted to apply for Self Serve Services with WorkBC. Please follow up with the worker to ensure they received the email with the instruction for how to participate. They will be prompted to select a WorkBC office, so please ensure they know to select the WorkBC-Parksville office.*

One of our primary goals at the Career Centre is to support local employers with their recruiting, hiring, and training process. The recent enhancements to the [WorkBC Wage Subsidy Program](#) can offset some of the initial wage costs associated with re-hiring and/or providing on-the-job-training and skill development.

Should you have questions or need assistance, please contact Lorrie Mohl, our Employer Services Coordinator.

Employer Services Coordinator
250.248.3205 ext. 236
250.228.8455 cell
250.248.2287 fax
lmohl@careercentre.org



Canada Summer Jobs Employment Grants – Bookmark this link!

The Federal Government will likely open up the application process the last week of December. Last year, the eligibility was broad for both employers and employees but many employers missed out because they didn't know about the deadlines. Details are not known yet for the 2022 grants but you don't want to miss out if you are eligible. We strongly suggest setting a reminder in your calendar for the last week of December/early January with this link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html>

Are You Ready to be Employer of the Month?

The Career Centre highlights an employer each month and we'd love to feature your organization! In a job seekers' market (when there are more jobs than job seekers) every organization needs to generate additional exposure to attract the right candidates. Accessing this opportunity is simple: contact [Lorrie](#) to get on the list and then answer a few questions (6!) and provide a JPG of your logo. Your profile, once created, remains active on our website as a resource for job seekers. Think of it as Tinder - but for Employers!

[Employer of the Month](#)

WorkBC Wage Subsidy Info Session for Employers

Are you hiring? Rehiring? Funding support may be available! Find out more at our Virtual Employer Information Session November 17 from 2:00 to 2:30pm.

- Is your organization eligible? It probably is...
- Is the worker eligible? They probably are...
- How to apply? It's now online...
- How to submit a claim? Also now online...
- How much is the subsidy? 30-50% for up to 6 months...

Call our front desk at 250.248.3205 today to reserve a spot.

If you are unable to attend, please call and ask for Lorrie Mohl, our Employer Services Coordinator, and she will gladly review the details over the phone.



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