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Releases

BCFED welcomes job-protected vaccine leave, calls on province to ensure workers don’t lose pay

(Unceded Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam territories — Vancouver, BC) The BC Federation of Labour welcomed today’s announcement that the BC government has improved regulations to ensure workers have job-protected leave to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

“With COVID-19 infections rising sharply, we are at a pivotal moment in BC. Ensuring all workers are vaccinated is critical to overcoming the surging pandemic,” said BCFED Secretary-Treasurer Sussanne Skidmore today. “But while job-protected leave is crucial, many workers can’t afford to take that time off if it means losing wages.”

She called on the government to move quickly so workers don’t lose pay for the work they miss while getting their vaccine. Skidmore noted that the Saskatchewan government recently introduced provisions allowing workers up to three hours of paid time off so they can get vaccinated against the virus.

“British Columbians have seen what Saskatchewan is doing, and we’re glad the province is looking for ways to ensure workers don’t have to give up pay to get vaccinated,” she said.

“By removing this barrier we’ll be making it possible for every BC worker to get their COVID-19 shot and collectively help stem this latest surge in the virus and its more dangerous variants.”

Skidmore said ensuring workers can be vaccinated without losing pay is an opportunity for employers to invest in the safety of their workers and their own success — while increasing customer confidence in their businesses and contributing to the greater good of the community.

“The more quickly and easily workers can get immunized, the lower the risk of costly outbreaks and shutdowns,” said Skidmore. “This is an investment in our province’s future.”