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Releases

BCFED commends government for ending use of self-help kit for employment standards complaints.

Vancouver - Today, the BC NDP government announced that the Employment Standards Branch will no longer require workers to use the so-called “self-help” kit to resolve employment standards complaints. The self-help kit forced workers to first file workplace complaints with their employer before a worker could reach out to the Branch for help.

“I know how difficult it is for vulnerable workers to tell their employer they have broken the law,” said BCFED president Laird Cronk. “Given the power imbalance, workers are afraid they’ll lose their job.”

The BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) has opposed the use of the self-help kit since it was first introduced in 2003 by the BC Liberal government. It was part of a move that cut services and reduced staffing at the Employment Standards Branch (the Branch). “Requiring workers to use a self-help kit was a cynical move by the former government intended to suppress complaints and cut costs at the Branch,” said Cronk.

This spring the BC NDP government introduced improvements to the *Employment Standards Act* along with a commitment to modernize the Employment Standards Branch. Further, Budget 2019 provided a long-awaited funding increase and the additional staffing needed to get rid of the self-help kit. “The elimination of the self-help kit and legislative improvements made this spring will make a

significant difference for workers in BC," stated Cronk. "I commend Minister Bains and the BC NDP Government for taking this step forward to ensure all workers in BC have fair access to their employment standards rights."