April 28, 2021 |

Statements

Paid vaccine leave now a guaranteed right of every worker in BC

(Unceded Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam territories — Vancouver, BC) The BC Federation of Labour is celebrating changes to BC's Employment Standard's Act which guarantees three hours of paid leave for workers to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The government legislation received royal assent and became law on Tuesday, April 27th.

"With paid leave for vaccines, the BC government delivered a win not only for working people, but for public health more broadly" said BCFED Secretary-Treasurer Sussanne Skidmore. "This legislation ensures workers, especially lower-income workers, don't have to reckon with losing wages to get vaccinated; and that means a more equitable and efficient roll out of the vaccine."

COVID-19 has exposed and exacerbated long existing inequities in BC. Lower-income workers —who are disproportionately women and racialized— are concentrated in sectors where they are much less likely to be able to work from home. These workers and their families are, consequently, more likely to be exposed to the deadly virus.

"We hope BC's leadership on paid vaccine leave encourages other provinces to follow suit to provide equitable access to vaccines for every worker across the country," Skidmore added.

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