

OPSEU / SEFPO Local 464 Newsletter

ISSUE #03
March 2024

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Editor's Note

Editor: M. Flowers

Ontario workers are celebrating a major victory! On February 12th, the Ontario Court of Appeal deemed Bill 124 unconstitutional.

In the 2-1 ruling, the court confirmed that Bill 124 - which capped public sector workers raises to 1% per year - is unconstitutional as it violated unionized workers collective bargaining rights which is a violation of Section 2(d) of *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Ford's provincial government has stated they will not appeal the ruling and will move to repeal Bill 124 from law as it is still impacting non-unionized and non-associated workers.



After almost five years, Bill 124 will no longer financially punish the approximately 1 million public service workers affected: health care, education, civil servants, police, and more.

It is time for the Ford Government to stop wasting public tax dollars fighting public service workers in the courts and instead, start investing in the services provided by those workers. The work continues to make that happen; in the meantime, let's celebrate this historic victory for public sector workers.

Bargaining Update

As mentioned at the GMM in February, we have completed 7 full days of bargaining. During these sessions, the team has been successful in reviewing non-monetary items that were identified as priorities during Local 464's original Demand Set meeting, held in fall 2022.

The review of monetary items began February 1st, and the bargaining team is continuing this process with the Hospital. Additional dates booked with the employer are April 3rd, 9th, and 10th,

The bargaining team is working diligently and appreciates your patience as they negotiate the best contract possible for our members.

Did you Know?

For staff who have paid sick time, there is often confusion about their appropriate rate of pay when calling in sick. As a reminder, the sick pay payout is based on benefit services and is as follows:

At least 6 months service:	66 ⅔ %
At least 1 year of service:	70%
At least 2 years of service:	80%
At least 3 years of service:	90%
At least 4 years of service:	100%

Understanding Our CA

Tips to better understand the collective agreement and how to solve common issues.

Contributor: U. Saeed

Problem: Workloads have increased and staffing levels have declined or stagnated. Staff are expected to work faster and be responsible for more patients. Healthcare Professionals are covering for absent co-workers more often and many of us skip breaks in order to get the work done. This means excessive workloads for everyone. What do we do?

Solution: Writing working load alerts (WA) brings attention to excessive workloads or issues related to workload management. WA's ensure relevant parties are aware of challenges facing staff and are a tool for employees to advocate for their needs; by highlighting specific instances of heavy workloads, employees can seek support and potential solutions. Excessive workloads can have detrimental impacts on the health and wellbeing of our members. By writing WA's, individuals draw attention to potential risks and emphasize the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Balancing workloads are essential for maintaining high productivity and the quality work our members provide. Alerts can help in addressing imbalances and can ensure that members can perform their tasks effectively. Submitting WA's is supported by our CA in the article below:

*Article 7.03 c) i) Professional Responsibility
The Parties have a mutual interest in the provision of quality patient care. Therefore, where an employee, or group of employees, covered by this agreement and governed by an Ontario College under the Health Disciplines Act, have cause to believe that they are being asked to perform more work than is consistent with proper patient care*

...

How to file a Workload Alert

Step 1: Complete the Workload Alert Form

Complete the workload alert found on the OPSEU Local 464 website: <https://opseu464.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Work-Load-Alert.pdf>

Within the description section please state the following:

1. Start with a clear and concise introduction. Identify yourself, your role and the purpose of the workload alert.
2. Clearly outline the workload related issue you are facing. Provide specific examples, such as excessive hours, tight deadlines, or an unmanageable number of tasks.
3. Describe the impact of the workload on your health, well-being, and quality of your work. Emphasize how it is affecting your ability to perform effectively.
4. If possible, include relevant data that supports your claims. This could include the number of hours worked, deadlines missed or any other quantifiable information.

Step 2: Distribute/Email the Workload Alert Form to your Manager, Local Area Steward and Chief Steward, Sophie Roy (chiefsteward@opseu464.org).

Once filed, a meeting is arranged with the Hospital to discuss strategies on how to meet patient care needs. Try suggesting practical and reasonable solutions to address the workload issue. This could include redistributing tasks, hiring additional staff or revising deadlines.

Remember to maintain a professional and respectful tone throughout the alert to enhance the effectiveness of the communication.

Financial Update

At the GMM in February, the 2024 budget was presented, voted on, and accepted by the membership.

Due to the sensitive nature of financial records, they will not be posted in the newsletter but will be made available to any member who requests further information. If you would like a copy of the 2024 Budget please email communications@opseu464.org

The Safety Corner

in SLS. Contributor: T. Van Dongen (Chafe), Health and Safety Officer

What is an MSD and what should we do about it?

One of the most reported incidents at work is Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD).

February 29, 2024 was Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness Day which promotes awareness of injuries also known as MSDs.

What injuries or illnesses are considered MSD's?

Some examples include pinched nerve, herniated disc, meniscus tear, sprains, strains, hernia (traumatic or non-traumatic), pain, swelling and numbness, carpal or tarsal tunnel syndrome and Raynaud's syndrome or phenomena.

Because MSDs are so common, as workers, we need to help ourselves by providing direction and recommendations to the employer to reduce the risk, and prevent injuries and recurrences

There are 3 areas to consider in order to prevent most workplace injuries, as it relates to MSDs.

1. Engineering

This involves taking into consideration the job design, the capabilities and limitations of the workers, and how materials, parts, products, and people can be transported, as well as the layout of the workstation.

This involves looking at practices and management policies on how work is completed. For example, this could mean reducing shift length and limiting overtime. It could include allowing for more rest breaks or rotating workers through the workspace more frequently. Another important engineering tool would be providing adequate training around the risk factors associated with the work, instructions, safe work practices and demonstrating techniques that can ease task demand.

2. Personal Protective Equipment

This could involve the use of braces, wrist splints, back belts/slings, or similar devices to offer protection against ergonomic hazards.

3. Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the science of fitting workplace conditions and job demands to the capability of the working population. The most knowledgeable people are those doing the work - in this case, we are talking about OPSEU members. Have your say, report MSD hazards to your manager, ask for the training required to do the work in the safest manner. Ask for an ergonomic assessment (ergonomicrequests@toh.ca)

Report hazards you observe and report injuries.

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Ask your steward and H & S officer for help if you are unsure what steps to take or reach out to Teresa by email: tchafe604@gmail.com

UKG Implementation

With the initial roll out of UKG well underway, the union has been made aware of the many issues facing members because of the software implementation. The frustration and dissatisfaction of

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members is clear and has been brought to the attention of the employer.

UKG is intended to reproduce past workflow, not change it. If members were working and being paid a certain way before, UKG should not change that process.

When and Why Flags are Generated

Flags are generated anytime the punch in/out windows are not followed or something out of the ordinary has occurred. If a flag is generated, it is best to put in a comment to explain the situation *every time*. If there is no comment/ explanation, managers will likely automatically deny the claim.

Punch in Window	Result
punch in ≤ 29 mins before shift or punch-in ≤ 4 min after start of shift	No Flag
punch-in ≥ 30 min before shift or punch-in ≥ 5 min after start of shift.	Flag Issued
punch-in ≥ 30 min before start of shift	OT Flag Issued
punch-in ≥ 8 min after start of shift	<i>Time deduction: round to nearest 15 mins</i>
Punch Out Window	
punch-out ≤ 4 min before shift end or punch-out ≤ 14 min after shift end	No Flag
punch-out ≥ 5 min before shift end or punch-out ≥ 15 min after shift end	Flag Issued
punch out ≥ 15 min after end of shift	OT Flag Issued
punch out ≥ 8 min before end of shift	<i>Time deduction: round to nearest 15 mins</i>

Below are a few suggestions to manage UKG and ensure appropriate compensation.

- Use **TOH_Guest** Wifi, **not** TOH_Corp
- Submit comments for anything out of the ordinary: PCR, actual punch out time for those who are expected to work “flex” hours, missed breaks, or if you confined to workspace for meal breaks
- The Audit tab allows members to monitor changes made by managers or ESS.
Note: managers *cannot* change your comments

Professional Awareness

OPSEU/SEFPO 464 represents Allied Health Professionals at TOH who provide diagnostic, technical, therapeutic, and support services.

Many of our members belong to professional colleges or associations who have annual awareness campaigns to bring attention to the importance of their work.

In March, the focus is **Nutrition Month, Pharmacy Appreciation Month, and National Social Work Week** from March 4 - 10.

OPSEU/SEFPO 464 would like to highlight some of the members whose work falls within the scope of these fields:

- **Registered Dietitians**
- **Clinical Nutrition Technician**
- **Pharmacists**
- **Pharmacy Assistants**
- **Social Workers**

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Featured Biography

Introducing Local 464 Treasurer: Vanessa Lawlor

I have worked at The Ottawa Hospital since 2009 when I graduated as a registered respiratory therapist. Currently, I work at the Heart Institute but have worked at both the Civic and general Campuses with inpatients and in outpatient clinics such as the Hyperbaric Unit and Cardiac Stress testing unit.

My interest in the union began after being encouraged by a coworker to attend an LEC meeting as an observer. I have been involved ever since. I have lobbied on behalf of OPSEU/SEFPO and the Ontario Health Coalition with Federal and Provincial Members of Parliament and assisted with a membership drive when Bowmanville, Ajax, and Oshawa hospitals amalgamated.

Entering into union roles and activities has a lot of history, complexity, and processes that are challenging to navigate. It's helpful to have a mentor and make social connections with other members.

Outside of the workplace I enjoy traveling, glamping, staying active, and taking long walks with my dog Axle.

Executive Positions

President: Alain Trudel

Chief Steward: Sophie Roy

Return to Work Officer & Secretary: Heather Allen

Treasurer: Vanessa Lawlor

VP Civic: Jordan Elliott

VP General: Melanie Flowers

VP Rehab: Una Wallace

VP Riverside: Lisa Hadley

Upcoming Dates

April 6, 2024	OPSEU Regional Meeting
April 25-27, 2024	OPSEU Annual Convention
Spring/Summer	General Membership Meeting (bylaws)
September 26, 2024	General Membership Meeting (Executive Elections)

We Want to Hear from You!

We would love to hear your ideas

Have a question you'd like answered? Suggestions on information you'd like to see? Looking for ways to get involved in the union? Want to feature your profession for our members to learn about? Email us at communications@opseu464.org

Respectful Communication Only

Please keep in mind the communication committee is a group of *volunteers* who are interested in keeping members informed as much as possible. Please be patient with email response times and keep all communication respectful. Aggressive, rude, or harassing behavior will not be tolerated.