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July 4, 2024

Dear Health PEI Members,

RE: Health PEI Summer Staffing Incentive

Since our last email to you on June 24, 2024, regarding our rejection of the employer's proposed summer staffing initiative, we have continued to negotiate with the employer for a better deal for our members. We have also heard feedback from you, the members, regarding your desire for an incentive similar to that received by other unions that would benefit you and assist your staffing challenges this summer.

We are pleased to announce that we were able to negotiate an improved summer staffing incentive agreement that we feel will be of great benefit to many members.

Further details of this agreement will be forthcoming, but some highlights are:

- Applies to all permanent and temporary full time and part time employees working in a 24/7 acute or LTC facility, as well as casual employees in those facilities for any hours worked beyond 0.5 FTE hours in a pay period;
- A premium of 0.5x an eligible employee's rate of pay per shift will apply to extra shifts worked in evenings, nights, weekends and statutory holidays;
- A premium of 0.5x an eligible employee's rate of pay per shift will apply to extra day shifts worked that are over and above 1.0 FTE hours in a pay period;
- These premiums are in addition to any other premium rate or incentive currently in place for IUOE Local 942 members;
- Full time employees have preference to pick up extra evening, night, weekend and statutory holiday shifts; and
- Employees who work at alternate work sites are eligible to be paid mileage for their travel to the alternate site.

This isn't a perfect deal. Our biggest disappointment is that not all members will be able to benefit from the incentive. However, our estimate is that approximately 75% of members are working in facilities covered by the agreement. Furthermore, the agreement will apply to facilities that are most likely to experience challenges in finding coverage for vacations, which means fewer denied vacations and coverage issues.

We must stress that this is a temporary arrangement for this year only. Part of our agreement includes a commitment from the employer to share its data regarding the effectiveness of the program. Having access to this data will allow the union to decide for itself whether the benefits of this initiative truly outweigh the drawbacks, which will inform our decisions on incentives in future years.

Two other issues remain to be addressed. First, the employer did not begin discussions with us regarding this initiative until May, after the summer schedule was to have been posted. Second, this initiative incentivizes overworked members to work even more so that their colleagues can take vacation, when the real problem – understaffing and unfilled vacancies – remains unsolved. Both of these issues were forcefully raised during our discussions with the employer, and we believe that the employer heard us. Various initiatives are underway to address the staffing issue and the employer has endeavored not leave discussions for initiatives such as this to the last-minute in the future.

In short, it appeared to us that an imperfect agreement was better than no agreement at all. We sincerely hope that this program works and that the members to whom it applies can take the vacation they deserve and earn some extra income for picking up extra shifts. We welcome all feedback on this agreement, positive or negative, so please reach out and let us know your perspective.

In Solidarity,

IUOE Local 942 Executive Board