

# CSSEA NEWS

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

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## Money Talk: An Argument for Salary Administration

Doris Sun, Communications Coordinator

For many agencies, it is the single biggest cost of operations: paying for talent. For management and excluded employees, what comes with this expense is the task of ensuring wages and benefits are fair and equitable and are within the capacity of the agency to pay. In order to standardize the process and establish a transparent framework under which salary decisions are made, prudent organizations invest in a salary administration plan for management and excluded and non-union employees.

The plan at its core consists of key features such as job descriptions, a salary policy that defines the pay level of the agency, a pay grid, board policy on how employees progress through the salary structure and a commitment to review the plan through market surveys such as CSSEA's Management and Excluded Compensation survey. Salary administration plans reveal how an agency makes salary decisions; for example, whether it values pay equity amongst employees within an organization or if it takes salary cues by examining comparable positions elsewhere in the sector or externally.

*"...Organizations that document their plans actually save money, because they have a framework to make decisions instead of being stuck in a reactive mode."*

*Rachel O'Connor, Mercer Human Resources Consultant*

CSSEA's latest Best Practices Series: Salary Administration Guide lays out an easy to adapt process on how members can devise their own salary administration programs. As the social services sector is one of the only sectors not formally mandated by government to have a salary administration plan, it is up to management at an individual agency level to devise strong plans that will prevent future government intervention.

There are also worthwhile economic gains to having a plan. According to Rachel O'Connor, a Consultant who provided expertise to the Salary Administration guide, "We find that organizations that document their plans actually save money, because they have a framework to make decisions instead of being stuck in a reactive mode. This also helps you communicate with employees so that they have the same expectations and see that there is a fair and objective process."

A salary administration plan, no matter how small or comprehensive, will serve to outline an agency's values and expectations for employees. It proactively explains why salary decisions are made and saves an agency time and confusion in justifying decisions to employees.

In order to get agencies started in the creation of their own salary administration plans, CSSEA will be launching several educational workshops to answer questions and help members through the steps in putting a plan together. ■

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# From the CEO

Every round of collective bargaining takes on an identity that often lasts far longer than the resulting collective agreement. I think all of us will remember this round as representing a full marathon with a finish line that always seems to be around the next corner. Every time we think we are nearing an end point it turns out there is another lap left.

Your bargaining teams have worked endlessly in an effort to reach a new agreement. For sixteen months they have looked for ways to address concerns raised by the unions and have reached agreement on twenty-two issues. Their deliberations have been guided by one criteria: the language being sought by the unions must allow employers to maintain their capacity to enhance the lives of those they serve. Where that criteria is not met employers have steadfastly refused to move and are to be commended for that

resolve. At the end of last month's meetings only four issues remained outstanding, thereby illustrating the determination with which your bargaining teams approached negotiations.

## BARGAINING BREAKS DOWN DESPITE SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS

- Lorne Rieder

The union is now seeking a strike vote and the future, at this point, is uncertain. While various scenarios are possible, our task is to prepare for the worst possible outcome in a comprehensive and professional manner. This will require timely work on employee communications and

essential services issues. CSSEA will continue to provide guidance on these and other matters that may arise going forward.

Like all rounds of bargaining this one will have a finishing line and there will be an end. I am comforted by the fact that we will reach that point with our experienced and united bargaining team holding firm to values we all share. ■




Recent cases confirm that employers have the ability to require that their employees follow their duties of good faith and fidelity, even when online and off-duty. In the right circumstances, employers may also look at their employees' online activities and take investigative or disciplinary steps if those activities are inappropriate.

In the case, Walder, [2010] BCESTD No. 113, the B.C. Employment Standards Tribunal found the employer was justified in terminating an employee without notice while on maternity leave due to Facebook postings on a co-worker's wall accusing that employee of "stealing her job" and making generally negative comments about the employer.

In the case, Loughheed Imports Ltd. v. U.F.C.W., Local 1518, BCLRB No. B190/2010, the British

## EGREGIOUS FACEBOOK COMMENTS CAN LEAD TO DISCHARGE AND DISCIPLINE

by Bela Barros  
Legal Research Analyst

Columbia Labour Relations Board upheld the employer's decision to terminate the employment of two employees for just cause after it discovered a series of disturbing and inappropriate comments on the employees' Facebook pages.

The Loughheed decision found that:

- Given the nature of Facebook, employees who choose to permit numerous people to access their private site cannot have a serious expectation of privacy with respect to their Facebook postings.
- Employers are justified in imposing discipline on employees who make insubordinate postings on their Facebook pages even in the absence of a social media policy.

Other cases pertaining to social networking have confirmed the foregoing approach. Employers that become aware of inappropriate social network usage should contact their HRLR consultant. ■

# In Profile: Garth Homer Society on Keeping a Legacy Alive

*A Conversation with Executive Director Kaye Kennish*

**Tell us about your organization. Who do you support, what community do you operate in and how large is your agency?**

Garth Homer Society helps adults with developmental disabilities become more independent and integrated into the Greater Victoria community. The Society serves more than 150 clients through day programs and employment services, with approximately 50 FTE staff, operating on a budget of \$2.9 million.

where staff are supporting many clients with dementia.



Staff and clients posing in front of a Garth Homer branded van.

Society such as finding sponsors to place their graphics on our vans in return for covering gas and maintenance costs on the van.

**Share with us a time when an employee went above and beyond for a client.**

I'm in awe of how often employees go above and beyond for clients at Garth Homer, it's almost an everyday occurrence here. But one recent time come to mind. The first involves a client who wanted to work out but found the gyms in our municipality are too noisy and chaotic. After an extensive search her worker found a quieter gym in a neighbouring municipality and undertook a lengthy bureaucratic process to obtain free access for the client. The client now works out regularly and has inspired a second client with the same problem to work out with her which meant the employee had to go through the bureaucratic process a second time.



Staff and client have fun at a golf tournament.

## Who was Garth Homer?

- Garth Homer was a social worker who was active in Victoria in the 1960s. He was instrumental in establishing the Social Work degree program at the University of Victoria
- He brought several related agencies, all three levels of government and key foundations together to create The Garth Homer Achievement Centre
- Until the mid-nineties the Garth Homer Society operated sheltered workshops for people with developmental disabilities. In 1999 the last of the sheltered workshops closed, marking the Society's successful transition to providing services that were truly community-based

**How are you able to build a sense of team in your agency?**

The primary source of a sense of team at Garth Homer comes from our common purpose. In our most recent staff satisfaction survey almost every employee said the best part of the job is working with our clients and expressed appreciation that Garth Homer Society is so client-focused. In these lean financial times there is simply no money for recognition or staff events so we are making an effort to include staff in promotional events like a recent radio station lunchtime broadcast from the centre, where the program sponsor provided a sandwich lunch for staff.

**Tell us about your work with community sponsors. In the age of increasing operational costs and decreasing funding, what advice do you have for fellow agencies looking to do some independent fundraising?**

It's important to build your profile in the community. This includes finding media opportunities, making presentations and building a good web and social media presence. It's also necessary to tap into professional fundraising expertise rather than try do the job off the side of your desk. A professional fundraiser has brought many innovative ideas to Garth Homer

**Tell us about the teams-based nature of your programs. Why is it important for your clients to work in teams?**

Each team develops programming to meet the specific interests and abilities of their clients. Planning activities for clients with similar abilities allows for a greater variety of approaches. Also, staff on each team develop expertise in supporting different clients. This is particularly important in our seniors' program

**What skills do you try to nurture in employees working in our sector?**

The ability to leave your personal biases behind when working with a client is so important. By that I mean having a strong enough sense of self that you can take your cues from the client rather than doing what you think the client would want, that you always understand the line where you end and the client begins. ■



## Ask an HRLR Consultant: Vanessa Wong



**Q:** *I have a question about Article 20. If an employee is on Compassionate Leave and other leaves that are with pay, does he/she continue to earn sick time, vacation time and lieu time?*

**A:** While on a paid leave (e.g., Article 18 – Annual Vacations, Article 19 – Sick Leave, or Article 20.1 – Compassionate Leave) the employee continues to earn vacation and sick entitlements.

- When an employee is on an unpaid leave, (e.g., Article 20.6 – General Leave) the employee continues to accumulate vacation and sick entitlements for the first 20 working days in a year. On the 21st day, the employee will stop accumulating vacation and sick entitlements.

- Lieu time in accordance with Article 16.5 – Overtime Compensation is not an accrual benefit. An employee receives compensatory time off in lieu of overtime.

- Employers should create a policy requiring employees to take their banked time off on a regular basis (e.g., every 6 months) so financial liability does not accumulate.

- Employers should be prepared to pay out the time accumulated in an employee's overtime bank if requested. The employer cannot insist that the employee take time off rather than being paid out.

Send your questions to [dsun@cssea.bc.ca](mailto:dsun@cssea.bc.ca)

## Board Chair Retiring

On March 31, Dale Cuthbertson retired from his agency, Chilliwack Community Services, and as a result, from both the board and panel.

Dale brought energy and enthusiasm to our board and panel and we wish him the best as he embarks on this new chapter in his life!

## Thank you for your Feedback!



We want to thank everyone who took the time to fill out our website questionnaire. As we are always looking for ways to improve our website, your feedback is very valuable! Keep checking future newsletters for details on website improvements.

## CSSEA @ Whistler: Did you Know?

- Whistler was the first designated resort municipality in Canada in 1975.
- It was developed with hopes that Vancouver would host the 1968 Olympics. Vancouver lost to Grenoble, France but did host the Olympics 42 years later.
- Whistler is home to 10,000 permanent residents. During peak months, that number swells to over 40,000.
- The \$600 million Sea-to-Sky highway improvement project has created straighter roads up to Whistler, 80km of new passing lanes, new reflective markings and median barriers.
- We look forward to seeing you in Whistler October 4-6 for our AGM!

## Important Changes to Criminal Records Checks

- Changes to the Criminal Records Review Act mean effective June 2011, employees working with both vulnerable children or adults need to be cleared through a criminal record check.
- Employees previously cleared to work with children need to be re-checked if they work with vulnerable adults as well, as that is the newest criteria.
- For more information, check the provincial government's website: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/criminal-records-review/> or contact your HRLR Consultant.