

# Issue of the day: Sick Leave



**LOCAL 20221**

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## Article 13—Short Term Sick Leave Program

### Union Proposal:

The Employer will provide paid sick leave for all employees who have completed three (3) months or more of service. Employees shall be paid 100% of regular salary until the 89th calendar day of any one sickness.

Every employee who may be absent from duty on account of sickness shall notify his/her immediate supervisor and no employee shall be entitled to benefits for time previous to such notification, unless delay is shown to have been unavoidable.

The Employer may require a medical certificate or a written statement from the employee as evidence of sickness. The Employer may further require reports from the employee's physicians from time to time, including reports by physicians designated by the Employer. The Employer will bear the costs of medical reports provided by Employer designated physicians.

Fraudulent use of sick leave shall be subject to the appropriate discipline.

### Rationale:

Our proposal removes from the collective agreement the reference to termination of employment if an acceptable standard of attendance is not achieved. Our proposal also removes from the collective agreement the reference that no payment shall be made if you are injured in the course of other employment.

We received many bargaining proposals regarding the manner in which the Employer was misusing this program. As you are aware the employer views excessive absenteeism as 1.5 days over the average bargaining unit usage of 3.53 days a year. The provincial average is about 8 days a year. We believe this exceedingly low corporate average is due to the Employer's policy of coaching and disciplining staff for what they view as excessive absenteeism. This policy has resulted in employees afraid to stay home when they are sick.

During bargaining the Employer stated that they have the right to coach, send letters and discipline staff for innocent absenteeism. Further, they are convinced that staff are abusing sick leave, in particular, in the Maintenance area.