

# COMMUNIQUE

*We Empower You To Make The Most Of Your Public Service Career*

## Our Top Five Current Issues

October 2024

This Communique provides BCEEa members with an update on the work that our advisors do to support out members including the most common issues we deal with in our day-to-day work.

### 1. Conflict Management and Performance Management

Members routinely ask us for advice on performance management issues either with their staff or for themselves. Many of these issues can be avoided by early and appropriate communication such as expectation setting and clarifying issues when performance problems are first identified (see our MyInfo Sheet – Advice for New Managers).



Setting expectations early in the relationship would help avoid these issues. For members who are initiating a performance management process, the BCPSA has a template that helps to clarify expectations, deliverables, timelines and support resources. We also urge members to contact the BCEEa earlier in the process to avoid later difficulties.

Advisors report that there appears to be considerable variation in how Ministries manage human resource issues. It is unclear, in some instances, if staff are unaware of existing policies

and practices or if they have chosen not to follow those guidelines and requirements.

In either case these lapses contribute to mishandled cases resulting in frustration and an erosion of trust in the employer which contributes to job churn and at times resignation. When there is the use of clear policies and thoughtful practices, the result is mutually understood findings, adjustments in behaviours and a positive outlook for productive relationships.

Our Advisors also routinely assist members with challenging work relationships by providing advice on how to address the situation in a positive way and develop a constructive approach to communication, rather than lashing out or being too blunt.

### 2. Newer Excluded Employees and Managers New to a Role

BCEEa advisors are seeing more individuals who are newer to their roles experiencing a range of challenges. These include:



- Lack of clear, timely and professional communication either by newer managers, or by their supervisors.
- Perception by staff that their supervisors are mistreating them (i.e., bullying, misuse of managerial authority) when engaged in communication about performance, expectations, and more. Some of these situations end up as formal complaints.
- Supervisors who are uncomfortable engaging in difficult conversations about specific issues or avoid or delay discussions, all of which can result in more serious problems as time goes on.
- Newer supervisors opting to use formal and potentially disciplinary processes with a direct report before considering other approaches to mitigate or improve a situation.

We are also seeing an increase in the number of new managers struggling with how to manage ambiguity and lack of clarity, both of which are a routine part of public service work.

In all cases, BCEEA advisors have helped members to find positive ways of resolving these difficult situations.

### 3. STIIP

Advisors report that lack of experience by supervisors and unclear communication can result in difficulties with STIIP. BCEEA advisors support members to collect all the information the employer requires, ensure the information being requested by the employer is appropriate, and helping members prepare for their appointment with their doctor or with their employer.

### 4. Hiring Process

We are seeing a rise in “rejection on probation” cases. Advisors reports that in most cases the hiring process appears flawed. We are often surprised by what is accepted by a hiring panel and believe that the pressure to fill positions is resulting in “bad fit” selections.

### 5. Lack of Support for Excluded Employees

Our advisors also see cases where excluded employees are surprised to find they lack support similar to unionized members. We urge members to contact us as soon as possible as our experienced and savvy advisors can help you resolve difficult issues in a timely manner.

## How the BCEEA Can Help

Encountering workplace challenges is a common experience. BCEEA members can talk through concerns with one of our Advisors. Our experienced and management savvy advisors fully understand your circumstances and have the expertise and insight to help you find the solutions you need. They will help you understand exactly what’s going on and will provide up-to-date information and advice. Contact us today if you have any questions.

