

TTOC Collective Agreement

Your collective agreement is the basis of your employee-employer relationship with your school board.

It defines:

- your rights
- the union's rights
- the board's rights
- definitions
- basic procedures for the sides to follow regarding issues such as assignments, filing a grievance, harassment, salary scales, seniority, rates of pay, your personnel file, evaluation procedures, supervision, and preparation time.

At times an administrative officer (AO) may ask a teacher on call to cover another class instead of having the prep time to which the person they are teaching for was entitled. This may be grievable under your local collective agreement. You should inform your local president that such a request has been made. If you have concerns or questions about requests that an AO makes you should check with the local president.

Healthy, supportive working conditions and environments are what everyone needs in their employment. Teachers continually and happily sacrifice their time and energy for students. Contract teachers and AOs should not assume that TTOCs will sacrifice their legal rights and responsibilities as defined in the collective agreement.

It is imperative that you support your agreement. The terms of the agreement are binding on you and your employer. The grievance procedure is in place to help resolve differences.

Discipline

Also included in your collective agreement is a discipline process to be followed by the employer if they believe you have acted in a manner deserving of discipline. At all times throughout this process you have the right to union representation. There is a union representative at each workplace to assist with concerns. In any case, the local president should always be notified immediately.

If you are contacted by an AO, the RCMP, or Family Services regarding allegations against you:

- **Do not** consent to or participate in an interview that could be, or is, disciplinary without a union representative.
- **Do not** make a statement to anyone regarding allegations or charges, say "I am willing to co-operate but I am unable to do so until I can contact the local or the BCTF."

Call the local or the BCTF (1-800-663-9163 ask for legal counsel)

If you require emergency legal assistance, the BCTF Appointment Calendar provides the phone numbers of all of the BCTF legal counsel.

If a complaint is made against you to the College of Teachers, the BCTF provides legal assistance. Contact your local president for help with this too.

Taking care of your teaching certificate: what you need to know about the BC College of Teachers

Payment of college fees

Your teaching certificate will be cancelled if you do not pay your college fees. Once your teaching certificate is cancelled for non-payment, it is expensive and time consuming to have it reinstated. If you do not have recent teaching experience, you may have to upgrade your teaching qualification. To avoid this situation:

- Pay your annual fee well before the due date.
- Ensure that you continue to pay your fees (and/or provide non-practicing forms to the college) even when you are not working due to shortage of work, illness, maternity or parental leave, retirement from a prior assignment, or any other reason.
- Check to ensure that your fee payment has been processed. You can do this by calling the college at 604-731-8170 or by checking the online registry of certificate holders at www.bcct.ca. Make a habit of doing this prior to the final date of payment.

If you feel that your certificate was cancelled in a manner that was unfair, contact your local president for assistance.

Qualification and fitness issues

College staff can provide you with detailed information on how to apply for a teaching certificate. College staff can also answer any questions you have regarding requirements for academic and teaching experience. If you have fairness concerns around your application for certification, contact your local president.

When you apply for a teaching certificate from the college, concerns may arise regarding your fitness to be a teacher. This most commonly occurs where there have been criminal charges. If this happens to you, contact your local president or the BCTF or immediate assistance.

Report to the college about your conduct or competency

If you receive any correspondence from the college indicating that there has been a complaint or report to the college about you, obtain legal assistance immediately from the BCTF. Your local president can help you with this. Written requests for legal aid can be mailed directly to the BCTF legal department (or faxed to 604-871-2288).

Do not make any statement or respond to questions from the college about your conduct prior to receiving legal assistance. Keep copies of all correspondence you receive from the College and provide them to the local president or BC Teachers' Federation staff.

Facing allegations before a professional body is inherently stressful, even where those allegations are inaccurate or minor. Remember that you are not alone. Your colleagues, your local, and the BCTF will assist you in responding to college proceedings.

Teachers on call and healthy and safety

The *Workers Compensation Act* and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OH&SR) are designed to protect workers by preventing workplace injury and disease. Teachers on call are entitled to the full protection of the act and the OH&SR. However, such rights are hollow unless they are fully exercised.

Here are some tips to help you get the most from your health and safety rights:

- When you arrive at a school, ask for the names of the BCTF representatives on the schools' joint health and safety committee. If you have any health and safety questions or concerns, speak with one of the representatives.
- Find out the name of the person who is the designated first aid attendant.
- Ensure that you have been provided with a copy of the school's emergency plan, including routes for evacuation and assembly areas.
- Ask if any of the students in the class you will be working with have a history of violence. If there is such a student, ask for and become familiar with the student's safety plan.
- Do not leave any food or drink unattended where it could be tampered with.
- If you suffer an injury at work, no matter how minor, advise the principal, vice-principal, or first aid attendant immediately. Fill out a WorkSafeBC Form 6A and make two copies. Keep one copy for yourself, send one to the local union office, and give the original to the principal or vice-principal. See your doctor and be sure to tell the doctor that the injury happened at work. If you want advice about your claim, or if you receive a letter from WorkSafeBC denying your claim, immediately contact Gail Montgomery, WCB Advocate, at 1-800-663-9163, local 1890, 604-871-1890.
- Report any incidents of violence or threats of violence to the principal or vice principal. If the incident of violence or threat of violence is directed at you, treat the incident in the same way as you treat an injury at work.
- Know that you have the right to refuse unsafe work. If you find yourself in any situation that you believe presents a risk of injury to yourself or any other person, remove students from the risk and advise the principal that you are refusing unsafe work. You should then contact the staff representative or a BCTF health and safety representative for advice and support.
- Ask your local union to arrange for a presentation of the BCTF workshop "Raising Health and Safety Awareness", which can be presented at TTOC Meetings, after school staff meetings, teacher orientation meetings, etc.

If you would like more information, please contact Mark Keelan, Health and Safety Officer at 1-800-663-9163, local 1891, 604-871-1891.