



BC's Union for Professionals

September 21, 2021

Lori Wanamaker
Deputy Minister to the Premier
BC Public Service Agency
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via email

Dear Deputy Minister to the Premier,

The PEA's Government Licensed Professional (GLP) chapter recently surveyed members regarding issues surrounding the pandemic and we would like to share the results with the Public Service Agency. We are asking that the Public Service Agency consider these responses and request that a more cautious approach be considered to prevent the spread of COVID in the workplace.

Overall, 548 members responded to the survey indicating the following:

- 41% of surveyed members do not feel safe to return to the office during Step 4 of the Provincial Restart Plan; 33% felt safe and 26% felt unsure;
- 59% of surveyed members would like to see physical distancing or occupancy limits in smaller areas;
- 58% of surveyed members would like to see continued improvements in building ventilation for Step 4 of the Provincial Restart Plan;
- 47% of surveyed members would like to see mandatory masks for indoor areas;
- 70% of surveyed members want telework flexibility beyond the two-day agreement that has been proposed by the PSA;

Hundreds of comments were received from the survey and the overwhelming themes focused on concern for the health and safety of children under 12 as well as for those dependants who are immune-compromised. Members also brought forward concerns around the how the disclosure of private medical information would be handled by the Employer.

As noted above, PEA members want more telework flexibility than is being offered. The Employer's approach to telework is overly rigid and does not provide a range of options that would be suited for professionals.

There is significant frustration among many of our members that their pre-pandemic telework agreements are no longer being honoured. Furthermore, members are being told they have to return equipment that they have been using for years and purchase



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their own at significant costs. The issue around the loss of permanent office space was also a strong theme.

We will be bringing forward the results of the survey, specifically around the health and safety concerns and telework policy to the employer at our next Joint Standing Committee. We will continue to strongly encourage robust COVID safety protocols and a more flexible approach to telework.

Shawna LaRade
PEA President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Scott McCannell
PEA Executive Director