

OVERVIEW OF SHORT-TERM TRAINING CRITERIA

WHAT IS THE FBA?

The Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) is the multi-union bargaining agent representing about 38,000 health care workers in British Columbia.

The Hospital Employees' Union is the largest of the 10 unions – representing about 35,000 members – followed by the British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union covering 1,300 members.

The other unions are: the International Union of Operating Engineers; the Construction and Specialized Workers' Union; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; the United Steelworkers of America; British Columbia Nurses' Union; the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, and the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry.

WHAT IS THE FBA EDUCATION FUND?

In the 2010–2012 round of bargaining, the FBA negotiated another \$1.25 million education fund for health care workers covered by the Health Services & Support Facilities Subsector.

This stemmed from the success of the \$5 million education fund secured in the 2006–2010 facilities collective agreement.

WHO MAY APPLY FOR FUNDING?

Current employees (regular and casual) covered by the facilities subsector collective agreement are eligible to apply for funding.

Employers confirm eligibility by signing the *Confirmation of Employee Status/Leave Form* in the application. Employers are asked to supply the FTE for a regular employee and/or confirm that a casual employee has completed more than 488 hours of work.

Employees covered by other training funds – negotiated in the 2010–2012 collective agreement – will be expected to apply to those funds for training money.

Joint Re-training Fund (for displaced workers): Employees who are displaced as a result of contracting out should contact their local shop steward and/or union servicing representative for information on accessing re-training funds. Impacted workers may also contact the **Joint Re-training Fund** directly at 604-456-7184 (or toll-free: 1-877-476-7184, or email at <jointbill29retrainingfund@heu.org>.

B.C. Health Education Foundation (for care aides and licensed practical nurses): The 2010–2012 facilities subsector collective agreement includes a provision for a dedicated funding stream for care aides and LPNs for short-term skills upgrading and post-basic education.

This money will be made available through the Chief Nursing Officer in each health authority. To access this funding, the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA), the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) and the health authorities must apply to the B.C. Health Education Foundation. Once this funding is secured from the Foundation, care aides and LPNs will be expected to access training in their own occupation (i.e. either skills upgrading or post-basic education) through the B.C. Health Education Foundation. This funding is likely to come on stream in the fall of 2010.

Care aides and LPNs are eligible for funding through the FBA Education Fund for long-term training to move into a new occupation within the FBA (i.e. for a care aide to become an LPN, or an LPN to become a nursing unit assistant).

WHAT TRAINING/EDUCATION WILL THE FUND COVER?

The training/education must be in a job classification *and job description* that is in the facilities subsector collective agreement.

Funding will be provided for two types of training – short-term and long-term. For information on long-term training, visit your union’s website.

WHAT IS SHORT-TERM TRAINING?

Short-term training provides members with opportunities to upgrade skills in their current job, related job, or other job classification (if training is in a different job category within the facilities subsector). This includes:

- courses that range in length from two to 20 days;
- longer courses taken outside of working hours (i.e. part-time or correspondence courses, evening classes, etc.);
- applications will be funded on a continuous intake basis, and may take up to five weeks to process;
- the Fund will pay the cost of the training program and course materials, up to a maximum of \$1,200;
- part-time/distance programs leading to a certificate, diploma or degree – that if available and taken full-time would require more than 20 days’ unpaid leave – may be eligible for up to \$2,400 for course costs (i.e. Purchasing Management Association of Canada, Medical Transcription, Nursing Unit Clerk), and
- the Fund will pay a training allowance (up to \$100 per day) to a maximum of 20 days, if unpaid education leave for training days is approved by the employer (for example: 10 days of approved unpaid leave could be \$1,000 for an employee working full-time hours). This amount will be pro-rated for employees working part-time or less than 7.5 hours per day. Casual employees requesting the equivalent of unpaid leave will need to submit payroll proof of hours and shifts worked in the six months before this application

EXAMPLES OF SHORT-TERM TRAINING:

- industry correspondence courses offered for buyers and information technologists
- evening academic upgrading, such as the Grade 12 biology pre-requisite for the **practical nursing** program
- upgrade for ticketed trades

(i.e. application date June 2010; proof of hours and shifts worked from December 2009 to May 2010 must be provided). (*see Frequently Asked Questions for a detailed explanation of the training allowance*).

WHAT TRAINING/EDUCATION WILL **NOT** BE COVERED?

- conferences and professional association meetings;
- employer in-service training;
- self-help, personal interest and leisure courses;
- courses leading to jobs outside the FBA bargaining unit;
- out-of-country courses;
- out-of-province courses (except correspondence), and
- courses through private educational institutions.

WHERE CAN TRAINING BE TAKEN?

- The course/program should be taken at a British Columbia **public** post-secondary college or institute, or a B.C. School District Continuing/Adult Education program.
- One exemption would be courses for **industry-specific required certification**, such as:
 - Purchasing Agent certification course;
 - Information Technology hardware or software certification course; or
 - Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) certificate in the HVAC/Refrigeration industry.

IS APPROVAL/PROOF OF TAKING THE COURSE NEEDED?

- **Confirmation of Employee Status and Leave Approval Form:** The *Confirmation of Employee Status* section of the form **MUST** be completed and submitted with **ALL** applications (even if leave is not required) to be considered for the FBA Education Fund.
- **Registration:** There must be written proof from the institution of course registration and/or a confirmed start and end date for the training. This also needs to be submitted with the FBA Education Fund *Application Form*.

WHAT ARE THE TIMELINES FOR APPLYING FOR FUNDING?

- Applications for programs/courses that begin April 1, 2010, or later, will be considered. (Applications for programs/courses that began from June 1, 2009 and are ongoing past April 1, 2010 may be considered with funding support only available from April 1, 2010 onwards).
- Short-term training applications will be reviewed on a continuous intake basis, and may take up to five weeks to process.

HOW DO I APPLY?

For detailed information on how to apply, or to download the *Application Form*, check your union's website.

If you want a printed copy of the application form and FBA Education Fund information, contact your local shop steward, local executive or union servicing representative; or call the FBA Education Fund at **604-456-7146** or toll-free **1-800-663-5813, extension 7146**.

HOW IS THE DECISION ABOUT FUNDING MADE?

The FBA Education Fund Committee has set the criteria for the funding application process. The FBA Education Fund Coordinator will review each application, apply the rules, and make a decision on the funding. The Coordinator will consult with committee members, if needed.

Successful applicants may receive funding for **one** short-term training program. However, members applying for a second time will only be considered after first-time applicants have been processed.

IF A FUNDING APPLICATION IS DENIED, IS THERE AN APPEAL PROCESS?

An appeal process is in place.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY (FOIPOP)

FOIPOP protects members from unauthorized use of their personal information. You will be asked to sign the Funding Application giving the FBA Education Fund Committee permission to:

- verify information that you provide with unions, employers, educational institutions and/or other funding sources;
- use your information in statistic reports on the FBA Education Fund, and
- be included in a follow-up survey to determine the success of the fund.

For more information, visit your union's website.