

## **OVERVIEW OF LONG-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.

Dedicated training funds were negotiated for workers, displaced due to contracting out, as well as for care aides and licensed practical nurses.

**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 <jointbill29retraining@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 AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES WILL THE FUND COVER?

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

The Fund covers two types of training – short-term and long-term. For information on short-term training, visit your union’s website.

### WHAT IS LONG-TERM TRAINING?

Long-term training provides members with opportunities to change jobs/careers within the facilities subsector collective agreement.

These courses can range in length from more than 20 days up to 12 months. The training requires more than 20 days’ approved unpaid leave to a maximum of 12 months (approximately 240 training days).

The first deadline for long-term training applications is **June 18, 2010**. Applications will be prioritized for funding (*see explanation under How will long-term training applications be prioritized?*). Future deadlines will be announced dependent on availability of funds.

## **EXAMPLES OF LONG-TERM TRAINING:**

- care aide to LPN
- sterile supply to pharmacy technician
- health records clerk to nursing unit assistant
- laundry worker to accounting clerk

The Fund will pay up to \$3,500 for the cost of the training program and course materials. Other funding sources include: B.C. Student Loans, Canada Student Loans, B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education Nurses Education Bursary, Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Program (ABESAP).

The Fund will pay a training allowance up to \$100 per day for unpaid education leave approved by your employer to attend training days (for example: 20 days of approved leave could be \$2,000 a month 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 prior to this application (i.e. application date June 2010; proof of hours and shifts worked from December 2009 to May 2010). *See Frequently Asked Questions for a detailed explanation of the training allowance.*

In rural and remote areas, additional costs may be considered on an individual and/or group basis.

## **WHAT IS THE TRAINING ALLOWANCE FOR?**

The training allowance may be used for transportation, benefits, daily expenses, etc.

## **WILL ANY BENEFITS BE COVERED?**

The FBA Education Fund Committee was unable to get provincial agreement from the health authorities to pay the costs of continuous medical, dental and extended health benefits while members are on leave for training in skills shortage areas.

Some health authorities have indicated they are prepared to consider maintaining benefits. Members should request continued coverage from their employer. Benefits remain covered for the first 20 days of leave. If the health authority will not continue benefits after 20 days, a member may purchase benefits (approximately \$20 per day); members should speak to their payroll/benefits department.

## **WHAT TRAINING AND 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.

### 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 to be considered for FBA funding.

**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 on June 1, 2009, or later, and are ongoing past April 1, 2010, may be considered for funding but only from April 1, 2010 onward.

The first long-term training application deadline is **June 18, 2010**. Future deadlines will be announced dependent on availability of funds.

### 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 WILL LONG-TERM TRAINING APPLICATIONS BE PRIORITIZED?

Approval is based on meeting the basic criteria. In addition, the committee will consider the occupational, regional and union distribution of applications.

### 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 and **one** long-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.

**Remember:** The FBA Education Fund will **not** cover all your expenses during long-term training. The Fund will pay up to \$3,500 for training costs and course materials.

The Fund will pay a training allowance/per diem up to \$100 a day for members on approved unpaid leave to attend training days (pro-rated for employees working part-time or less than 7.5 hours a day). For example, a full-time member taking a six-month leave could receive about \$12,000.

## **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.*