



TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION No. 31

AFFILIATED WITH TEAMSTERS CANADA AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
#1 GROSVENOR SQUARE, DELTA, BC V3M 5S1

November 12, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Back on May 14th, 2025, the Union shared some educational material with the membership to address common questions and provide general guidance. We are re-sharing that same information today, along with a few updates and clarifications that were missed on the original material. Our goal remains to support members with clear and consistent information.

Can a Teamsters Member Hire, Fire, or Discipline?

No. These actions fall under the responsibilities of management and cannot be performed by Teamsters members.

Can a Teamsters Member be on a Hiring Interview Panel?

Yes. However, participation must be limited to providing subject-matter expertise about the qualifications of candidates. Members on a panel:

- Cannot make or influence hiring decisions.
- Cannot assign scores or take part in the final determination.
 - Must avoid any conflict of interest.

Their role is strictly advisory and focused on professional expertise, not decision-making authority.

Can a Teamsters Member Request or Handle Medical Notes, Documents, or Medical Certificates?

No. Confidential medical information must always be handled by the Employer — typically an exempt manager, HR representative, or a member of the HR medical team.

To maintain privacy and confidentiality, Teamsters members should never request, collect, or review another member's medical information.



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What about a Teamsters Supervisor or those Acting in a Management Position?

Even as a Teamsters Supervisor or when temporarily acting in supervisory or management roles, Teamsters members remain part of the Union, and the same principles outlined above continue to apply.

What if there is Conflict Between Fellow Teamsters Members?

If a conflict arises between Teamsters members, please reach out to your Union for assistance. The Union is here to help mediate, de-escalate, and support a positive resolution.

What if there is Conflict Between Teamsters and Non-Teamsters Members?

Please reach out to your Union for support, representation, and guidance.

When we stand together in solidarity, we continue to build a strong, respectful, and supportive workplace, as well as a strong and effective Union. The shared goal between the Employer and the Union is always a healthy, harmonious environment for everyone.

If you have questions or need support, please don't hesitate to reach out to your shop steward team or Business Agent, Murwan Salame. All conversations with your Union are confidential.

On behalf of your Union, President Stan Hennessy, the Teamsters Local 31 staff, your shop stewards, and bargaining committee, thank you for your continued strength, unity, and solidarity.

(For reference, the May 14th Educational Material is also enclosed.)



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May 14, 2025

Educational Material About Some of the Most Common Questions Received by the Union.

What is a Collective Agreement?

A Collective Agreement is a legally binding contract negotiated between an Employer and a Union. It outlines the terms and conditions of employment for unionized employees (a bargaining unit). Essentially, it is a "rule book" that defines working conditions, wages, benefits, and other aspects of the job, such as pay, leave, and grievance procedures.

What is the Difference Between HR and My Union?

- Human Resources is employed by the Employer who may not at times have the best interest of the unionized workers.
- Your Union represents you and acts in your best interest, advocating on your behalf for any issues that arise, like grievances, etc.

What Should I Do If I Have an Issue with My Manager (Non-Teamsters)?

- Always contact your Union representative first. They can listen to your concerns, provide guidance, and help you navigate the situation.
- If you approach HR, keep in mind that anything you say could potentially be used against you in the future. Your Union representative is there to ensure your interests are protected.

What Should I Do If I Have an Issue with a Teamsters Coworker?

- Contact your Union representative to discuss the issue. The Union can help mediate between members to resolve conflicts fairly and help prevent escalation.
- Teamsters should always work towards maintaining a positive and respectful working environment for all members.

What Does It Mean When My Manager or HR Say They Have an Open-Door Policy?

- While an open-door policy may sound inviting, it's important to remember that any information you share with HR or management may be used later to their benefit. It's always a good idea to consult with your Union before discussing any concerns with them.
- Your Union representative can provide support to ensure your rights are protected in these situations.

What Should I Do If I Was Asked to Attend an HR Meeting?

- Never attend an HR meeting without Union representation, whether the meeting is initiated by you or HR. Anything discussed in these meetings could potentially be used against you, so it's important to have your Union there to represent your interests.
- Even simple conversations with HR can become complicated, so be cautious.

What Does It Mean If My Manager Starts Communicating Mainly by Email, Documents Conversations, and Uses Words Like 'Expectations'?

- This could be a sign that your manager is documenting events to build a case, particularly if there are concerns about your performance.
- It's a good idea to consult with your Union representative so they can understand the situation and provide advice. Additionally, it's wise to keep your own record of events that could help in the future.

What Should I Do If I Think My Manager Is Misbehaving, Being Abusive, or Not Following Policies?

- If you believe your manager is engaging in inappropriate behavior, it's important to report it so it can be addressed. Sometimes HR may not be aware of these issues until they are brought forward.
- Managers are responsible for maintaining professional behavior and ensuring they do not violate your rights or create a toxic work environment. Your Union is here to help address and resolve such situations.

What Are My Workplace Health and Safety Rights?

- **The Right to Know:** You have the right to be informed about workplace hazards and receive training to protect yourself.
- **The Right to Participate:** You have the right to participate in workplace safety initiatives, such as serving on a health and safety committee and attending health and safety meetings.
- **The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work:** If you believe work is unsafe, you have the right to refuse it without fear of penalty. Always consult your Union before refusing work to ensure you understand the process.

Why is My Job Description/ Profile Different From The "Class Specification"?

- Job postings and profiles should always be prepared and written in accordance with the minimum standards and requirements set in their corresponding class specifications, and the language should be aligned with each other. There should not be deviations in required core duties, minimum standards, criteria, experience, and qualifications.
- Deviations in language should only be meant for clarification purposes.
- Please consult with your Union representative so they can understand the situation and provide advice.

What Is a Class Specification and Re-classification?

- A class specification is commonly referred to as "job description". It is a formal document that states what your duties and responsibilities are in the role that you occupy, along with the minimum qualifications and standards required for that position.
- Re-classifications consider job complexity and not volume.
- A re-classification may occur if the duties, responsibilities, or the required qualifications of the position have changed significantly so that the present classification is no longer appropriate, or;
- The duties, responsibilities, or the required qualifications of the position have not changed, but are sufficiently dissimilar from the type of duties, level of responsibilities or required qualifications as described in the class specification for the class to which the position is currently assigned.
- Re-classification could be upwards, downwards, or the class may remain the same with minor changes.
- Metro Vancouver performs the VPD's Teamsters job evaluations and recommends if a re-classification is warranted or not. The VPD accepts or rejects those recommendations.
- More information is contained in the Collective Agreement.
- Your Union representative is available for clarification and assistance.

What Should I Do If I'm Asked to Do Work Outside of My Job Description or Classification?

- In a unionized environment, if you're asked to do work outside of your official role, it's best to contact your Union representative to discuss the situation. The principle of "work now, grieve later" applies, meaning you should proceed with the task but address any concerns afterward.

What Are My Rights and Benefits?

- Your rights and benefits are outlined in your Collective Agreement. It's important to read and familiarize yourself with this document so you know what you are entitled to.
- If you're ever unsure about anything, your Union representative can help clarify any language or provisions in the Agreement.

What Protects My Rights?

- Your rights are protected under several key documents, including:
- The Collective Agreement
- The BC Labour Code
- The Employment Standards Act
- The Workers' Compensation Act/Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
- The BC Human Rights Code
- The Union plays a key role in protecting these rights on your behalf.

What Should I Do If I'm Asked to Participate in an OPCC Investigation?

- As a civilian Teamster who does not fall under the Police Act, you cannot be compelled to participate in an OPCC (Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner) investigation.
- There is no obligation in the Collective Agreement requiring you to take part in an OPCC investigation if you are not subject to the Police Act.
- However, if you hold a position under the Police Act (for example, as a Special Municipal Constable), you may be required to cooperate with the investigation, as you fall under its jurisdiction.
- Participation in an OPCC investigation is voluntary for those who are not governed by the Police Act.
- If you decide to participate, it is highly recommended that you have your Union representative present during any interview or related communication to ensure your rights are protected and you fully understand the process.
- If you are uncertain about your status or have any concerns, please contact your Union representative for clarification and guidance.

What Should I Do If I'm Being Asked to Complete Medical Forms for a Medical Accommodation Plan or Due to Extended Absence?

- The Employer may request medical forms, but they must do so in a reasonable manner and not overreach. If you're unsure about the forms or questions being asked, contact your Union representative to ensure everything is appropriate.
- Always remember that the Employer is not entitled to a diagnosis nor to directly contact your physician. If you've given authorization for them to do so, you can revoke it in writing at any time.
- The Employer has the right and duty to reasonably inquire. You have the duty reasonably cooperate within your limitations and restrictions.

Are My Conversations with My Union Protected?

- Yes, conversations with your Union representative are always confidential. We follow your instructions and do not disclose any information to others without your consent. The Union is here to provide you with advice, representation, and support in a confidential manner.

What is Collective Bargaining?

- Collective bargaining is the process through which a union and an employer negotiate a collective agreement to determine the terms and conditions of employment for unionized workers.
- This process allows employees, through their union, to negotiate directly with their employer on issues such as wages, benefits, and working conditions. The goal is to reach an agreement that outlines the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and employees.
- Further details on the collective bargaining process will be provided in future educational materials.

I Have Been Offered Another Teamsters Position and I Accepted It, But I Have Not Been Able to Occupy It Due to Employer Operational Delays. What is Next?

- According to established practices, once an employee is notified of a promotion or transfer, the employer is expected to release the employee to the new position within 30 days of the notification.
- If the employer is unable to release the employee due to operational needs after 30 days, the employee should be compensated at the new pay rate.
- If the new pay rate is lower than the employee's current rate, the employee will continue to receive their current pay rate until they can occupy the new position.
- If you are experiencing delays in occupying the new position, please contact your Union representative for further clarification or assistance.

Final Thoughts

- The Union encourages the membership to always be involved, active, and vocal within their Union. Never hesitate in contacting your Union official Murwan Salame or your hard working Shop Stewards who are very happy to assist you in your needs. A united and well-informed membership makes a strong Union.
- Both the Union and the Employer have invested interest in having a harmonious workplace, where all parties are meeting their commitments and obligations towards each other.
- **On behalf of your Union and President Stan Hennessy, thank you for your hard work and support.**

Murwan Salame, Your Union Official and Representative, Teamsters Local No. 31 Union
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