

12 February 2018

Dear members,

By now you are aware that we have been advocating in support of the impacts of Bill 17. I want to give just a quick update.

We have been working in 2 areas:

1. Financially- we have been advocating that there needs to be increases in contracts for, at the very least, the holiday/vacation pay increases that agencies have to incur as a result of the new legislation. We have shown both Ministries (CS & CSS) a sampling of the costs from those of you that sent them in. We have also shown the costs of overtime as they stood in December. Many of you have probably rearranged your staffing models and worked with your staff to manage the costs associated in this area. We have made it very clear that in those areas where overtime is not avoidable the costs are extremely high.
2. Variance or regulation changes to Bill 17 – In order to make changes we have to show that there is a business driver for change and then be able to make a case for that change along with some solutions about how to make it. The government made it clear that any variance/regulation would need to be sought out by the Association on behalf of the agencies or by agencies themselves. They preferred that we do it collectively. As a result ALIGN and ACDS are working together to achieve one or the other.

We have made a business case that we need a variance/regulation change that covers the crisis nature of the work and the 24/7 operations (group homes, crisis nursery, family support workers, specialized 1:1 workers as examples). We have made a suggestion that a regulation or variance similar to the section 9 caregiver regulation that health currently has would be helpful. In principle there is agreement. We are awaiting a draft.

We are also seeking a definition of scheduled work - as we have explained why having a schedule is not how many service delivery sites providing service to families/ individuals when and where they need it. You can then develop your work site agreements based on this.

The other area we still need direction on is the live-in 24-hour shifts. We are asking about them and if they can be accommodated in this regulation/variance.

Currently the Caregivers Regulation for overtime is hours over 12 in a day and 264 in a month. We are currently looking at overtime pay on hours over 12 in a day and between 184 and 200 (still to be determined) in a one month period, labor will not allow us to go to 264. Most group homes currently work on a 12 week schedule. Knowing the maximum hours your residential/group care staff work in a month would be helpful. Concurrently we need to know

which agencies have a Union and in their collective agreement what are the hours where overtime is paid.

What comes next is figuring out how we get general consensus from the staff. We need to have majority support. Which means that you as executive directors will need to talk to your staff once we have something for you to view and think about, then quickly talk with them, and somehow (yet to be determined) we need to have assurance that staff are in agreement.

As we work with the Ministry of Labor and Ministries of Children Services and Community & Support Services, we have also written to the Minister of Finance and the Premier outlining the concerns with the legislation and the need for funding to cover these costs. You can see the letter on our website.

This is ongoing work. I will update you as we make progress and when we need you to take some action.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me RhondaB@alignab.ca or call 780 233 5459.

Rhonda Barraclough