

FAQ

The Public Services Sustainability Act (Bill 28)

What does this bill do?

This bill restricts collective bargaining by imposing a two-year wage freeze on all new public sector collective agreements. Any new agreements will be limited to:

- 0 % for the first year
- 0 % for the second year
- 0.75 % for the third year
- 1 % for the fourth year

In addition to general salary increases any other monetary benefits e.g. premiums, bonuses, allowances etc. cannot be increased at the bargaining table.

Pay increases as a result of promotion and re-classification will not be affected.

Nurses are public sector employees and will therefore be affected by this bill.

What happens when our current agreement expires?

Our current agreement expires on March 31, 2017. The current agreement will remain in effect until a new one is negotiated and ratified. If Bill 28 becomes law, the conditions outlined above would be imposed on our next agreement.

Does the bill affect pensions or pre-retirement leave?

No, the bill contains no mention of pensions or pre-retirement leave. The employer still has the right to propose rollbacks at the bargaining table. MNU would strongly oppose any rollbacks including to pre-retirement leave or pensions.

How is MNU responding?

We are opposed to this legislation. By interfering with our right to bargain a fair agreement, the government is sending the wrong message to nurses. MNU president Sandi Mowat has been outspoken about the concerns of nurses. She has spoken to media and will be presenting before the Legislative Committee in the coming months.

When does the bill come into effect?

Government hopes to pass this legislation by the end of session in early June. Once a bill is passed, it is up to the government to decide when it takes effect.

The Health Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act (Bill 29)

What does this bill do?

This Bill establishes a fixed number of bargaining units for each health region and for each province-wide health employer such as Cancer Care Manitoba and Diagnostic Services of Manitoba Inc.

There will be seven bargaining units for health care workers. They are as follows:

- Nurses
- Physicians
- Medical residents
- Physician assistants and clinical assistants
- Professional/technical/paramedical
- Facility support
- Community support

All the unionized nurses in Manitoba will make up one bargaining unit.

How does it affect nurses?

Currently, MNU represents approximately 97 per cent of unionized nurses. There are other unions that also represent nurses.

Under this proposed legislation, nurses can only be represented by one union.

In situations where nurses are represented by more than one union, the legislation would require a representation vote.

What are representation votes?

A representation vote is where employees complete a secret ballot to determine which union will bargain on their behalf. Since nurses in Manitoba are represented by more than one union, this legislation could force nurses to vote on which union they would like to represent them.

How is MNU responding?

We are opposed to this legislation. Representation votes would simply add further complication and cause unnecessary disruption to a health care system already burdened by recent government cuts. We believe there are more efficient ways to organize collective agreements in the health sector.

When does this bill come into effect?

Government hopes to pass this legislation by the end of session in early June. Once a bill is passed, it is up to the government to decide when it takes effect. Timelines beyond that are unclear at this stage.