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May 8, 2020

Dear Members;

**Re: EMALB Complaints – Important Communication – Liability Insurance**

Further to earlier communications on this subject, we write once again to advise you on the importance of purchasing and maintaining insurance in relation to your Paramedic practice. And to warn members about a recent Employer communication regarding seeking advice on practice complaints made to the EMALB. We also include an important message to current policy holders.

Letter to BCEHS: <https://bit.ly/2WezS8P>

See page 12 of the attached Ops Update: <https://bit.ly/35G9RCG>

## **Professional Liability Insurance**

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**It is CRITICAL that all Paramedics carry liability insurance to protect you and your Paramedic practice.**

Our members are committed, respected health professionals who provide the highest possible level of care to the citizens of British Columbia. However, the high-risk nature of the services provided, and unique aspects and responsibilities of practicing paramedicine create unique challenges.

Complaints to the EMALB can and do arise – unfortunately on a more and more frequent basis and, often, through no fault of our members. Responding to complaints, even frivolous ones, can be costly when it comes to obtaining legal advice. If substantiated, a complaint can have far-reaching implications including the imposition of restrictions or conditions on your practice, or even the suspension or revocation of your license.

Insurance coverage for all Canadian paramedics is available through the Paramedic Association of Canada's *Professional Liability Insurance Program* at an annual premium of \$59.00 (with a \$500.00 deductible); that includes coverage to the policy limit for costs associated with legal expenses incurred to defend EMALB complaints. For more information or to purchase insurance please see: <https://paramedic.ca/site/liability> or contact MARSH at **1.888.725.5137** or at [paramedic.service@marsh.com](mailto:paramedic.service@marsh.com)

Additional Information can be obtained <http://www.apbc.ca/members-area/news-and-updates/provincial-news-and-updates/emalb-representation/>

## **Responding to EMALB Complaints – Do not seek assistance from BCEHS**

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Do not contact the Employer for assistance in responding to an EMALB complaint.

Recently, in the March 2, 2020 publication of *OpsUpdate*, the BCEHS communicated that they are available (through the Employer's Clinical and Professional Practice team) "*to provide support and review your complaint to provide advice prior to your response submission to the EMALB*".


Regardless of who initiates the complaint, the Employer's interests are not aligned with yours as a respondent. For example, facts gathered by the Employer in such an 'advisory' setting may be utilized to inform an Employer investigation and/or as a basis to impose discipline on you under the Collective Agreement. As well, unfortunately the BCEHS has been reporting paramedics to the EMALB with increasing frequency. As complainant, the

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Employer has a foreseeable and direct conflict of interest with you as a respondent to the complaint. It is highly problematic for you to seek the support and advice of your Employer when responding to EMALB complaints.

Although advice and representation on EMALB matters is not provided by APBC, you can contact APBC for general information/ direction on next steps. Where an EMALB complaint results in an Employer investigation and/or discipline under the Collective Agreement, the Union will continue to represent members in respect to those matters. Should you have any questions or concerns please reach out to your Regional Vice President or Provincial Executive.

Sincerely,



Troy Clifford  
Provincial President  
Ambulance Paramedics & Emergency Dispatcher of BC  
CUPE Local 873

TC/sd/MoveUp

