



April 19, 2017

RE: UHR Unit Chief Update

Dear Members:

We are writing with further information, specifically for Unit Chiefs, about the implementation of Universal Hourly Rate (UHR). If you're unfamiliar with UHR, please review the Union information page [here](#).

The Union has received many questions from On-call Unit Chiefs, about the elimination of the monthly On-Call Unit Chief allowance. The allowance is being removed by 50% now, and the final 50% in April 2018. Many chiefs have advised that even with the increased hourly wage they will receive, they will likely not be able to recover the loss of the allowance. This is because the number of administrative hours is limited by the Employer, and in some stations, ambulance call outs are also very limited.

We have discussed this situation with the Employer, and advised them that if these UC's suffer a wage reduction because of this change, it may affect the Employer's ability to recruit and retain staff in these important positions. Despite this, there is no change in the decision to remove the allowance.

Considering this, we feel it is important to remind UC's as to your rights to pay for the role you fulfil.

We've been advised that many UC's may be 'bracketing', 'bundling' or 'grouping' their off-duty call outs into a single pay submission. Also, some UC's may not be submitting for 'quick' calls or texts they receive while off-duty.

The shared understanding between the Union and Employer on submissions by Unit Chiefs for off-duty administrative work events has been that requests for pay should be reasonable, and not necessarily for every off-duty point of contact. The criteria for what is considered 'reasonable' likely varies from Unit Chief to Unit Chief. However, with the removal of the monthly allowance, the threshold of what is considered reasonable is likely now lower. **In short, if a Unit Chief is contacted and required to perform work for the employer while off duty, they should be submitting a pay claim.**

Unit Chiefs (On-call or Full-time) should not be bracketing, bundling or grouping their off-duty call outs. Nor should managers be requesting or suggesting that this occurs. Bracketing, bundling or grouping call outs is the practice of putting together smaller increments of work, until they equal the total time of a call out. This issue was canvassed in 2013, via a policy grievance. The Union was successful, and the practice of bundling or grouping call outs was eliminated. You can

review this [arbitration decision here](#). If you are being directed to do so by a manager, you should contact your RVP for assistance.

Some Unit Chiefs have also reported being directed to complete administrative work after an ambulance call out which lasts less than four hours. This too is a violation of the Collective Agreement. An ambulance call-out ends when the crew returns to the station, ensures the ambulance is left operationally ready and required paperwork is completed. This practice is confirmed in the Employer's [payroll policy 3.2.5 – Callouts](#). The Employer may not assign additional administrative duties to a crew following an ambulance call out. Again, if you are being directed to do so, please contact your RVP for assistance.

It is the position of the Union that with the removal of the On-call Unit Chief allowance, the Employer is transitioning to a pay-per-incident system of compensating UC's for work performed while off duty. No longer is there any blanket payment to compensate the UC for carrying the Employer's phone, being available 24/7 to your crews, or short circumstances of work. It is therefore important that Unit Chiefs ensure they are claiming all reasonable circumstances of work performed while off duty.

For further information on UHR, including the new wage grids, please visit the Union UHR information page at: <http://www.apbc.ca/members-area/information/uhr-information/>

Sincerely,

Provincial Executive Committee
Ambulance Paramedics of BC

/km/MoveUp

