

Portability of seniority and benefits when moving to a new job

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I recently moved to Kelowna to be closer to my daughter and her family. Four months ago I resigned my position in Prince George. A month later ... three months ago ... I was hired as a casual at Kelowna General Hospital, then almost immediately posted into a full-time regular position.

I just heard yesterday from a colleague that I should have been able to keep all the sick leave credits I accrued at my old position at Prince George Hospital. Is this true? Are there other benefits that are portable between jobs? What are my next steps?



In your case, your sick leave credits are not the only benefits that you are entitled to "port" to your new employer. When a member covered by the Health Science Professionals Provincial Agreement changes jobs, Article 29 allows you to port a variety of benefits, including:

- all sick leave credits;
- years of service for vacation entitlement recognized by the previous employer;
- the salary step (increment) and increment anniversary date;
- municipal pension plan and seniority (see Articles 9 & 10 for more details). Seniority was not portable prior to March, 1999.

Contact your employer's human resources department, or ask your steward for assistance. Article 29 provides for a relatively seamless transfer of benefits to a new employer when a member gets a job at another facility covered by the collective agreement:

- within 90 days if hired as a regular employee, including temporary regular; or
- within 150 days if hired as a casual and then posts into a regular position.
- When a member is hired into a casual position, she must ensure that her letter of employment states that she is seeking regular employment, or benefits may not be portable.

If the employer initiates a transfer under Article 10.08 ... Temporary Assignment or the Health Sector Labour

Adjustment Regulation Sections 3 & 4 ... then the transfer is entirely seamless and all benefits and banks continue as if no transfer occurred. If your employer initiates a transfer under any of these provisions, please contact your steward.

If a member has not taken all of her vacation before changing jobs, then the employer will pay out the vacation time.

If the member would like to take time off, then she should postpone her start date or request an unpaid leave from the receiving employer in advance.

Medical, dental and extended health benefits start on the first day of the month following the date of hire. For example, if a member starts work for her new employer on May 5, her benefits start on June 1. Benefits continue until the end of the month when a member terminates her employment, so long as the member starts the new position within 30 days of resignation from her previous employer, she will be covered without interruption.

The portability of severance allowance is addressed in Article 13.02 ... Severance Allowance ... says the allowance is portable if a member is hired at another facility within one calendar year. If a severance allowance has already been paid out, the member does not have to serve another 10 years qualifying period, but they will not receive severance again for any service which has already been paid out.

Long-term disability coverage is not continuous and special leave banks are not portable. When a member changes employers, LTD ceases on the last day of work and comes into effect the first day of hire into the new position. 

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