

## EPL UPDATE #6

August 19, 2020

### **RE: Clarification on the extension of LOU #11: Top-up Pay and Benefits**

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We have recognized that there may be misunderstanding or confusion regarding the extension (Addendum) of Letter of Understanding (LOU) #11 with respect to top-up pay, and we wish to clarify this.

Section C. The Employment Insurance Supplementary Unemployment Benefit (SUB) Plan from the original Letter of Understanding #11 allowed for eligible employees to receive a “top-up” pay to bring employees to approximately 75% of their average weekly earnings (insurable), before deductions. Subsequent to signing LOU #11, the Government of Canada decided all employees laid off due to COVID-19 would collect the CERB, which only allowed for an allowance of up to \$1,000.00 per month. This allowance meant that higher earning employees were unable to achieve 75% of their pay. As a result of the Federal Government change, an addendum to LOU #11, which broke down three different groups of employees, was signed on April 27, 2020. The allowance was provided for up to 16 weeks for eligible permanent employees (benefitted 20 hours or more per week) while in receipt of CERB. For eligible part-time (less than 20 hours per week), temporary and Student Page employees, top-up payments were provided for up to 8 weeks while in receipt of CERB.

Some employees thought that because LOU #11 was extended, that the allowance would also be extended. Unfortunately, this is not the case. If your layoff date was delayed to May 2, 2020 (Group 2 Employees) and you had 16 weeks of benefits, your top-up ended on August 14, 2020.

Still, with all of the unknowns caused by COVID-19, EPL and the Union wanted to ensure that laid-off employees received something in case layoffs continued past 8 or 16 weeks. LOU #11 provided for the following with respect to Benefits:

*In the event the temporary layoff exceeds the duration of the SUB Plan, EPL will pay both the employee and employer portions of the associated benefit premiums until the temporary layoff ends through, including but not limited to, recall, expiry of this LOU, resignation, termination of employment or permanent layoff.*

We recognize that the temporary layoff is financially impacting our members and these measures were put in place to help provide some relief to this.

While we know that words do not fix the situation, to our members who continue to be temporarily laid off, we are continuing to work with EPL to bring you back to work. We will work towards providing you with as much information as we can, as we know that the uncertainty you face right now is extremely taxing and stressful.

***Sincerely,***

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