



Unit B, 927—26th Street, Brandon, MB R7B 2B7

Volume 1 - September 2026



Welcome back everyone! With September business behind us, I hope you are all well and settling into the new school year. In this addition of the BTA BUZZ you will find lot's of information about upcoming dates and benefits. Take Care,

*Sandra Thompson, President*

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:



### October

October 5

World Teacher Day

October 5

PD Day - No classes K-12

**October 6**

**Brandon School Division Trustee Candidate Forum**  
**7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. – Brandon University Evan's Theater**



October 12

Thanksgiving Day (All Schools Closed)

**October 15**

**Last day to register for LIFT**

October 22

BTA Council Meeting – 4:15 p.m. – Hybrid

October 23

Professional Development Day (MTS PD Day) – No Classes – K-12

October 28

Joint PD Fund Applications Due by 4:00 p.m.

October 28

BSD School Trustee Elections



### November

November 11 Remembrance Day (All Schools Closed)

November 19 BTA Council Meeting – 4:15 p.m. - Hybrid

November 20 Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences (9-12)/PD (K-8) No Classes – K-12

November 27 Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences (K-8)/PD (9-12) No Classes – K-12



BTA 2026-2027 Executive Committee Members



Sandra Thompson, President



Jodi Armour, Vice-President



Cale Dunbar, Treasurer



Lynn Nicol, Secretary



Daniel Pegus  
Member-at-Large



Heather Ramsey  
Member-at-Large



Jamie Harrison  
Member-at-Large



Regina Derewianchuk  
Member-at-Large



2026-2027 Committee Chairs



Leadership Training

## Employment Standards

### Employment Standards Changes-Sick Notes for Employee Absences

Effective October 1, 2026

#### Purpose

Changes to The Employment Standards Code will limit when employers can require

employees to provide a sick note for a short-term illness or injury. These changes take effect on October 1, 2026.

The new rules are intended to reduce unnecessary requests for sick notes while allowing employers to verify longer absences when appropriate.

#### What Is Changing?

A sick note is a note, certificate, letter, or other document from a health professional that confirms an employee cannot work for a short period because of an illness or injury.

Beginning October 1, 2026, employers cannot require a sick note unless:

- The employee's absence continues for more than one week, or
- The employee has missed more than 10 scheduled workdays due to illness or injury during the same calendar year.

An absence for part of a day may count as a day of absence toward the annual 10-day threshold.

#### What Employers Need to Know

Employers may no longer require a sick note for most short-term illnesses or injuries that fall within the limits set out in The Employment Standards Code.

When a sick note can be required, employers must accept notes from eligible health professionals who provided care for the employee's illness or injury, including:

- Physicians
- Physician assistants and clinical assistants
- Registered nurses and nurse practitioners
- Registered psychiatric nurses
- Licensed practical nurses
- Psychologists
- Midwives
- Equivalent health professionals outside Manitoba, where applicable

If an employer requires a sick note, the employer must reimburse the employee for any reasonable fee charged to obtain the note.

To receive reimbursement, employees must provide proof of the cost within 30 days. Employers must reimburse the employee within 30 days after receiving proof of the expense.

#### What Employees Need to Know

Employees generally cannot be required to obtain a sick note for an illness or injury related absence of one week or less, unless their total illness-related absences exceed 10 scheduled workdays in the calendar year.

Employees who are required to obtain a sick note may be reimbursed for reasonable costs, provided they submit proof of the expense within the required time-period.

#### Other Medical Documentation

These changes apply only to sick notes used to verify short-term illness or injury absences.

Employers may still request medical documentation when permitted by law or where documentation is needed for purposes such as:

- Certain job-protected leaves
- Workplace accommodations
- Return-to-work planning
- Insurance requirements

#### Additional Information and Resources

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is attached for additional information.

This information is also available on the Manitoba Employment Standards website:  
[www.manitoba.ca/labour/standards](http://www.manitoba.ca/labour/standards)

Employers may also wish to review educational resources, and employer supports related to the new requirements prepared by Doctors Manitoba, in partnership with employer and human resource organizations.

Employment Standards

Phone: 204-945-3352

Toll-Free: 1-800-821-4307

Website: [www.manitoba.ca/labour/standards](http://www.manitoba.ca/labour/standards)

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This bulletin provides a general overview of legislative changes. For complete details, refer to The Employment Standards Code.



Teaching is deeply emotional work and it's okay to need support. Whether you're a beginning teacher, seeking workplace safety guidance, or exploring wellness resources, support is available through the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Scan the QR codes below to learn more about the services and supports available to you.

Mental health matters and **MTS Kii** is here for you. Scan the QR code for 24/7 support, or call 1-866-814-0018 anytime.



**Medical Intervention:** Planning for daily or non-emergency medical procedures.



Resources for reporting **violent incidents** in schools.



**Allyship:** How to support 2SLGBTQIA+ colleagues.



**Online safety** resources for MTS members.



**Beginning teachers** resources.



Explore **health benefits** provided by MTS.



**Workplace safety, health** resources and more.



**THE MANITOBA  
TEACHERS'  
SOCIETY**

Explore additional resources and more by visiting **mbteach.org**

Your Manitoba Public School Employees (MPSE) benefit plans play an important role in supporting your health and wellbeing, and that of your family. We review the plans annually to help ensure they remain competitive while continuing to meet members' needs.

Please review this newsletter for important information about your benefit coverage, upcoming premium rates, and plan enhancements effective in 2026 and 2027. For full details about your coverage, please visit the MPSE benefit plans website at [www.mpsebp.ca](http://www.mpsebp.ca).

## Benefit Plan Enhancements effective September 1, 2026



### New coverages:

- **Gender-affirming care** up to **\$25,000** lifetime maximum per person for expenses such as hormone therapy and surgical expenses not covered by the provincial programs
- **Family-building benefit** up to **\$10,000** for fertility drugs and **\$5,000** for other related expenses, per lifetime, including fertility treatment and adoption related expenses
- **Incontinence, colostomy and ileostomy supplies** (prescription required)

### Increased coverages:

- **Flash glucose monitoring** increased from \$2,000 to **\$4,000** per person calendar year
- **Continuous glucose monitoring** increased from \$3,000 to **\$4,000** per persons per calendar year
- **Eye exam** maximum coverage increased from \$120 to **\$140** per person every two years, with no limit to the number of eye exams in that period
- **Insulin pumps** increased from \$1,000 to **\$5,000** per person every five years

## Benefit Plan Enhancement effective January 1, 2027

- **Mental health practitioners** increasing from \$1,500 to **\$1,750** per person per calendar year

## Health and Dental

Each year, rates are set based on claims usage, including inflation in the cost of Health and Dental services.

The following monthly premiums for **Health** plan members (including all plan enhancements noted above) are effective **September 1, 2026**

|        | 12-month payroll   |
|--------|--------------------|
| Single | \$96.50 (-\$4.50)  |
| Family | \$198.50 (-\$9.00) |

The following monthly premiums for **Dental** plan members are effective **September 1, 2026**

|        | 12-month payroll     |
|--------|----------------------|
| Single | \$41.80 (no change)  |
| Couple | \$83.90 (no change)  |
| Family | \$128.60 (no change) |

*You are not eligible for coverage under the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) since you have access to a group Dental plan.*



## Life and Accident Insurance

### Premium rates: No change for 2026

The following monthly premiums are effective September 1, 2026:

| Type of Insurance  | Monthly rates                                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Group Life</b>  | \$0.185 per \$1,000 of coverage                             |
| <b>Family Life</b> | \$5.00 per covered member (\$20,000 spouse/ \$10,000 child) |
| <b>Accident</b>    | \$0.50 single /\$0.75 family per \$20,000 unit              |

### Upcoming change!

Effective January 1, 2028, Group Life insurance amounts for members aged 71 and over will be capped at 200% of annual earnings. Premium payments will be reduced to reflect this.

### Need more Accident Insurance?

Every September, as long as you are actively at work, you can add or increase Accident Insurance for yourself or your dependents—without medical evidence of insurability. Contact your payroll administrator for an application form. Your new coverage will begin on the date your application is received by your administrator. You must submit your application on or before September 30, 2026.

## Reminder about eligible life events

You may increase your Group Life\* or Accident insurance coverage without medical evidence of insurability within **90 days** of an eligible life event. Eligible life events include:

- Legal marriage or entry into a common-law relationship\*\*
- Birth or adoption of your first child\*\*\*
- Death of your spouse
- Divorce or termination of a common-law relationship
- Loss of life insurance coverage under your spouse's group benefits plan

*\* At any time other than a life event, Group Life coverage can be increased with medical evidence of insurability approved by Canada Life. Coverage can be decreased at any time.*

*\*\* For the purposes of the plan, a **common-law** relationship means you have continuously resided with a partner for at least one year in a conjugal relationship.*

*\*\*\* You may also add **Family Life** coverage without medical evidence of insurability within 90 days of gaining your **first** dependent.*

| For these resources/information/services...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Visit...                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Access benefit booklets, as well as paramedical reasonable and customary maximums</li> <li>▶ Active members under age 65 can purchase extra Life, Critical Illness and Accident Insurance with Freedom to Choose™. Visit the <i>Group Life</i> tab for details.</li> </ul> | MPSE Benefit Plans Website <a href="http://www.mpsebp.ca">www.mpsebp.ca</a>                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ View remaining coverage amounts, submit claims online, set up direct deposit reimbursement, access your ID card</li> <li>▶ Manage your coverage on the go with the mybluecross® mobile app</li> </ul>                                                                      | Blue Cross Plan Member Site <a href="http://www.mb.bluecross.ca">www.mb.bluecross.ca</a>                                                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Reimbursement of 90% (instead of 80%) on eligible prescription drugs</li> <li>▶ No membership required to access the pharmacy</li> <li>▶ Online ordering and home delivery services</li> </ul>                                                                             | Costco Pharmacy <a href="http://www.costcopharmacy.ca">www.costcopharmacy.ca</a>                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Reimbursement of 90% (instead of 80%) on eligible prescription drugs</li> <li>▶ Home delivery of maintenance drugs for chronic conditions; prescription management and automatic refills</li> </ul>                                                                        | Express Scripts Canada (ESC) Pharmacy® <a href="https://pharmacy.express-scripts.ca/MPSE">https://pharmacy.express-scripts.ca/MPSE</a>                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 100% reimbursement of eligible birth control, diabetes, HIV and HRT medications</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                 | Manitoba Enhanced Pharmacare Program <a href="https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/pharmacare/mepp.html">https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/pharmacare/mepp.html</a> |