



MUNASA Bulletin – October 2020

Dear colleagues,

The academic term is well underway but under very unique and challenging circumstances. With Montreal and its surrounding regions being declared a COVID-19 red alert zone, most employees must continue to work remotely from home. This has not slowed us down. You may recall, in early 2019 the University carried out a review of the MPEX salary scales, which had not been comprehensively benchmarked since 2008. It is hard to understand why McGill, a leading university, would allow 11 years to pass before completing a comprehensive review of M salary scales. The exercise in 2019 demonstrated that salary scales had fallen behind the Montreal market, including other universities and employers. We understand that this was one of the principal arguments that culminated in the M unionization drive and it may have been a motivating factor that led to the compensation review. Adjustments to salary scale minimums and midpoints were introduced on June 1, 2020. While we are happy to see these increases at last, it does not reconcile years of lost income which ultimately affects salaries, pensions, etc. MUNASA filed a significant number of disputes on behalf of its members in the months of August and September to address salary inequities.

Merit continues to be used to bring employees closer to their midpoint when it should be used exclusively to recognize performance, which is the very definition of the word 'merit'. Those with years of institutional knowledge and exceptional service often receive less merit because they are above the midpoint. We will continue to address these concerns with Labour Relations.

We realize that McGill's success is dependent on the support of its managers yet we continue to be the most vulnerable. For many, the hours formerly spent on their commute to and from work are now being spent working longer hours from home. With the launch of **Workday** on August 4, many managers are working through lunch, evenings and weekends to ensure that people get hired and are paid, this includes course lecturers, teaching assistants, research assistants, casuals and academics. However, almost all business processes in Workday take longer to complete and are more complicated than anything we have experienced before. While McGill is promoting 'My Healthy Workplace' on one hand, on the other we are finding managers at their breaking point, not knowing who to contact to understand the multifaceted business processes associated with Workday. Those working in Shared Services (SSU) have been inundated with thousands of tickets requesting help to resolve Workday issues. Managers across the university and our SSU colleagues are doing their best to address the complaints coming from employees on why they haven't been paid, why there are issues surrounding their hire, why they have lost their access, when will their appointment be approved, and many more. MUNASA was informed that a 'swat team' was organized to address and resolve Workday issues and limitations. It cannot be disputed that training for end-users was insufficient, many Job Aids (How To's) were not available when Workday was launched, Power Users were ill-equipped to respond to queries due to lack of training, as well limitations with the platform created havoc. In fact, on-going training resources are still lacking. There is no question that managers are resilient; however, with the

increased workload and related stress, it is not sustainable and will potentially lead to burnout. Many have questioned why Workday was launched shortly before the fall term commenced, essentially the busiest time of the year.

Managers are known to go far beyond reasonable expectations but please be mindful that if you are working overtime, you are entitled to overtime, according to the Personnel Policies and Procedures <https://www.mcgill.ca/hr/employee-relations/policies-procedures/salary-administration-policy>. If you have taken on additional temporary responsibilities or a project, you should have a conversation with your supervisor about a non-base miscellaneous payment. If you don't raise it, it may not be offered. There is a subtle expectation that managers are to work long hours without recognition or overtime, which is not acceptable.

To gently remind you, if you are feeling overwhelmed and you need support, please contact the Employee and Family Assistance program (details available at <https://www.mcgill.ca/hr/benefits/eap>).

The University received an email from Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) Fabrice Labeau, on October 6, "**Employees who can work from home must work remotely**". However, those who provide essential services have no choice but to come on campus to fulfil their responsibilities. We received an announcement on August 31 that parking fees would resume as of September 27, and then another announcement on October 6, that fees would be reduced daily and monthly by 50% until further notice. Parking fees vary by location but were deemed to be comparable to the cost of a monthly STM pass. McGill's announcement about parking fees was a day after the government announced new restrictions for universities in a red alert zone which went into effect on October 8 to October 28. MUNASA took a firm stand and requested that parking fees be waived until the red alert was lifted but senior administration disregarded our request. We ask that you do what you can to stay well and be safe.

In the meantime, we want to express appreciation for your support and your participation at the Zoom events organized by MUNASA. We will continue to do all we can to represent the rights of our members and to keep you informed.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out and let us know by emailing info@munasa.com.

Stay well and keep safe,

The MUNASA Executive