

## **Sick Leave Absences A Rising But Curable Trend**

*--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

**January 10, 2008, St. John's, NL** – Employers in this province are expressing concern with workplace absences, especially in light of the increased tightening of the local labour market. To address this issue, the Employers' Council has developed a new workshop, which offers creative solutions to this issue. The response to this workshop has been overwhelming with Council having to turn away participants.

According to an article published in the Vancouver Sun, absenteeism costs Canadian employers an estimated \$8.6 billion annually. Richard Alexander, Executive Director of the Employers' Council, points out, "There are many other costs to the employer aside from direct financial costs. Existing employees in the workplace often have to bear the burden of carrying extra work, which often leads to discontentment and added stress, further reducing the productivity and output of the workplace, potentially leading to greater work absences".

The Newfoundland & Labrador Employers' Council's full-day session will be devoted solely to the issue of managing sick leave in the workplace. This session is bringing together professionals from the medical, human resources, and legal fields. Employers will learn their legal rights and how to develop and implement an effective sick leave policy, best practices for managing sick leave in the workplace, and removing any barriers that might exist.

The Employers' Council's session will encourage employers to take stock of their employees – to encourage and energize them for the work that lies ahead throughout the year and to reduce the stress they might experience, which often leads to sick leave usage. Alexander further notes, "Employers must first understand sick leave usage in their workplace and then develop creative programs and policies to control it. Tactics to reduce sick leave should not involve disciplinary measures, it should involve creating positive work environments – environments that empower employees to be their very best."

The Employers' Council session on "**Managing Sick Leave**" will be held at The Bungalow, Bowring Park, on Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. More details can be found at [www.nlec.nf.ca](http://www.nlec.nf.ca).

*The Newfoundland & Labrador Employers' Council is the lead business advocacy group on labour and employment-related issues in this province.*

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