

# DEC Notes

Information for OPSEU members at  
Driver Examination Centres  
Ministry of Transportation of Ontario



Issue #11 April 2003

## OPSEU and MTO agree on protocols to protect DEC staff against SARS

After a long dispute, including work refusals, OPSEU and the employer (MTO - MBS) have signed off on protocols to protect Driver Examiner Centre staff from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

A STOP notice is to be posted in areas where the public enters each DEC. Screening guidelines are also provided to employees for use in cases where clients show possible SARS symptoms.

It took a great deal of collective action, time and effort to develop these proposals after the employer initially refused to provide any guidelines to deal with SARS. In the end, DEC staff, working with OPSEU's Provincial Health and Safety Committee, were able to bring enough pressure to bear on the Ministry that safety measures were stepped up in the workplace.

A SARS Guideline will be provided. If members encounter clients that have shortness of breath, are coughing, and who appear to be flushed or sweating, staff may proceed to:

- provide the client with a Notice of Collection of Personal Information as in the SARS Guideline.
- ask a series of questions as in the SARS Guideline.

You are permitted to do this only if the person shows all of the above symptoms. Staff cannot ask the questions on the basis of a client belonging to a particular social or ethnic group.

The employer also encourages frequent hand washing, and will provide waterless hand wash.

If you do not have the guideline, or if this protocol has not been followed in your workplace, contact your union health and safety representative or steward. More information is available from [lmccaskell@opseu.org](mailto:lmccaskell@opseu.org)

### **Pension questions?**

For information about your pension benefits, rights and entitlements during the transfer, and on future OPSEU pension presentations, contact Paul Dunseith (as below).

**Organizing:** Contact OPSEU at 1-800-268-7376. Organizers for the DEC campaign are Paul Dunseith at ext.355, Ed Ogibowski at ext. 362 and Connie Huziak at ext. 327.

**Your Job Security Officer:** Judith Marion, OPSEU x 370 [jmarion@opseu.org](mailto:jmarion@opseu.org)

**Your Reasonable Efforts Committee:** John O'Brien, Hm. (807)-628-8066; cell (807)-628-4364; [jobrien2@tbaytel.net](mailto:jobrien2@tbaytel.net); Gail Kreutzkamp hm. (519)-742-4017, [gailkreutzkamp@hotmail.com](mailto:gailkreutzkamp@hotmail.com); Stephan Michnowiec, pager, 416-405-0050

**Your MERC Team:** John O'Brien (as above), Serge Valcourt (705) 472-7900 x 6490, Robert Houston (519) 372-4045, Peggy Maybury (416) 235-4218. Or contact your Staff Representative or the steward in your workplace.

### **Authorized for Distribution:**

**Leah Casselman, President**

DEC Notes is published as a regular update for OPSEU staff in Driver Examiner Centres. For more information see <http://www.opseu.org/campaign/mtoindex.htm> on the OPSEU web site.