

# BC Employment Standards Coalition

---

March 28, 2019

## **BC Auditor General must conduct performance audit of Employment Standards Branch**

**(Vancouver)** For almost two decades, BC's Employment Standards Branch has failed to adequately enforce the *Employment Standards Act* and the *Employment Standards Regulation* and this must be investigated by BC's Auditor General, says the BC Employment Standards Coalition.

These two statutes establish the basic employment rights of BC workers and a performance audit by the Auditor General would examine whether the Employment Standards Branch (the Branch) is carrying out its mandate effectively, efficiently and economically, says Coalition co-chair David Fairey.

"A series of policy changes and cuts beginning in 2002 caused a major breakdown in the Branch's ability to effectively carry out its responsibilities," Fairey says. "Since 2002, eight regional offices throughout the province have closed and enforcement staff has been cut in half."

The only basic employment rights and protections for the overwhelming majority of BC workers are those guaranteed by the *Employment Standards Act*, but because it has not been enforced adequately thousands of workers have not had their complaints addressed, the Coalition explains.

Urgent reforms are needed to address the neglect of workers' rights for 16 years by the previous Liberal government. However, nothing has changed in the inadequate way the Branch operates since the new government was elected two years ago despite a commitment during the election to update employment standards, the Coalition adds.

## BC Employment Standards Coalition

---

“That is why we are calling for a performance review by the Auditor General,” says Fairey. “Unfortunately, nothing has happened on this file since the provincial government was elected, which we do not understand. The need for reform is urgent.”

The [BC Employment Standards Coalition](#) campaigns for decent wages and working conditions and respect and dignity in the workplace. The Coalition comprises individual members, representatives from worker and community legal advocacy organizations, public policy researchers, labour lawyers and volunteer advocates. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC Office is a coalition member.

**For interviews, please contact:**

David Fairey, Co-Chair, BC Employment Standards Coalition

604-430-6036, 604-818-2349 (cell)

[david@labourconsultingservices.com](mailto:david@labourconsultingservices.com)