

MINISTRY of AGRICULTURE, FOOD and RURAL AFFAIRS

MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)

December 16, 2020

Teleconference 1-866-633-1033 / 416-212-8013

For Management:	For OPSEU/SEFPO:
Alaina Oda (Co-chair) Doug Reddick (regrets) Colleen Fitzgerald-Hubble	Melanie Begin (Co-chair) Marcus Rangai Daira Miranda (regrets)

Management Resources	OPSEU/SEFPO Resource
Jared Friesen Kristin McCrimmon-Jones Pam Martell Tessa Manera	Kathleen Demareski, OPSEU/SEFPO

AGENDA	STANDING ITEMS	ACTION REQUIRED
Welcome and Introductions	Alaina opened the meeting at 9:35am	
Additional Agenda Items / Changes to the Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Coordinator Announcement 	
Ad Hoc Meetings	<p>A list of ad hoc meetings was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will continue GROW Ad-Hoc Meetings for January 2021 	
Surplus List	Management reported that there are no employees on the surplus list.	

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Temp Agency Staff	Management reported that they are not aware of any temp agency staff currently working in the ministry as of December 16, 2020.	
Fixed Term Staff Reports	<p>Management provided fixed term staff reports in advance of the meeting dated November 30, 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion about co-op students and fixed-term irregular on-call staff 	<p>Management to send fixed term reports one week in advance of MERC date</p> <p>Management to follow-up with the Union</p>
Conversion Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management reported on two employees 	Management to follow-up with the Union on conversion entitlements e.g. consecutive time
Diversity and Inclusion	<p>Management reported on:</p> <p>OMAFRA Anti-Racism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OMAFRA will be developing an Anti-Racism Action Plan. Approach and timelines TBD. Planning for broad consultations with staff and Union in the New Year 2021 <p>Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Day of People with Disabilities – Dec 3rd ○ International Migrants Day – held Dec 11th - DM Kelly attended November DIWG monthly meeting <p>Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launched in February for branches to discuss topics related to discrimination, harassment and racism 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recent OMAFRA examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ADM Kelly McAslan’s blog post on “Embracing Diversity and Inclusion at OMAFRA” o Strategic HR Branch discussion o Economic Development Division working group (e.g. identifying resources for internal discussions and planning for external discussions with stakeholders) - D&I conversations have branched out to topics related to mental health. Reminders for employee resources EFAP, AbilitiCBT and Manager’s Mental Health toolkit - Survey sent to Directors to report on their D&I activities <p>Indigenous Cultural Competency Training (ICCT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 93% completion rate - New cohorts expected to start for January to March 2021 <p>Diversity Career Champions Program (DCCP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20-21 program has launched, and the application period is open until December 16th - Number of employee participants is anticipated to be lower than last year (29 participants last year) - Program will continue to be virtual 	<p>Management to report back on survey results</p>
Disclosures	<p>Management distributed a list of disclosures/information shares to OPSEU/SEFPO prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Discussion about verbal information shares for COVID-19</p>	<p>Management to update disclosure/information share listing and resend to Union</p>
Transition Exit Initiative	<p>Active: 5 Approved: 125 (since program began in 2013) Non-Program Exit: 24 Withdrawn: 9</p>	

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	<p>Winter TEI Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication to all-OMAFRA staff on December 14th to advise the ministry will conduct a TEI review in March 2021 <p>Corporate Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September 2020 MERC identified discrepancies in TEI data - OMAFRA worked with TBS to reconcile the data 	
<p>Health and Safety Update</p>	<p>Health & Safety Representatives in Regional Offices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two offices currently without an HSR i.e. Woodstock and Vineland - London office has 6 staff headquartered there which will require an HSR <p>Alternative Emergency Locations – 1 Stone Rd.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current practices require staff to sign in using the visitor’s logbook beside security. In the event of evacuation, Service Ontario will take logbook to take attendance at safe place outside 95 Stone Rd - Staff need to wear face coverings when travelling down stairwells; there is not a requirement for physical distancing due to it being an evacuation - Physical distancing required outside - Business Services Branch is working on updating the evacuation protocol as more people return to the building and updates will be shared at MERC once finalized - During inclement weather, staff need to check-in with management and then can seek shelter (e.g. personal vehicle) 	<p>Management to follow-up up with Union for London Office</p>
AGENDA	FOLLOW UP	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>Gradual Re-Opening of OPS Workplaces (GROW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation for GROW is paused until late January 2021 - GROW team continues regular meetings with OMAFRA leaders to discuss updates and address management questions or concerns - DM Kelly continues to host monthly ministry check-ins. Next meeting is scheduled for December 21st 	<p>Management to schedule Ad-Hoc GROW update meeting for January 2021</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GROW team continues to develop tools to support and plan for staff's eventual return to the office - Managers have been reminded to be flexible and empathetic when responding to any staff related concerns 	
OPS Future State Modernization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Union inquired about flexible work arrangements - OPS and OMAFRA Pulse Surveys were conducted in summer 2020 to obtain feedback from staff on remote work and other topics related to the pandemic response - Ongoing conversations at CERC e.g. building leases and office space 	
AGENDA	NEW BUSINESS	ACTION REQUIRED
Area Coordinator Announcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion about fulltime fixed-term contract 	Union to follow-up directly with MIP Management
MERC 2021 Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will continue with morning time slot from 9:30am – 12pm - 2021 dates to be confirmed offline - Ad-Hoc Meeting week of January 18th, date to be confirmed 	Management to follow-up to confirm dates
Next Meeting Date	TBD, 2021	

Original signed by:

For the Union

Original signed by:

For Management

December 16, 2020

Date