

Workload: When Is It Too Much?

Busy periods are part of every workplace, but when being overwhelmed becomes the everyday expectation, it may be time to look more closely at your workload.

Vacancies, staffing shortages, changing priorities, tight deadlines and additional responsibilities can gradually increase the amount of work employees are expected to manage. Sometimes duties from vacant positions are redistributed, or new responsibilities are added without existing work being removed.

When this happens, documentation matters.

Keep track of vacant positions, additional duties, changing responsibilities, missed or shortened breaks, overtime, unrealistic deadlines and work that cannot be completed within regular working hours. Save emails and make notes of conversations where you have raised workload concerns or requested additional support.

It is also important to communicate when competing priorities cannot reasonably be completed. Instead of simply saying you have too much work, ask your supervisor for direction:

“I currently have several competing priorities that are due at the same time and cannot reasonably complete all of them within my regular working hours. Please confirm which work should take priority.”

This creates a clear record that you identified the concern and asked management for direction.

If you are regularly performing duties that are significantly different from your position, contact CUPE. Changes may raise questions about classification, higher-rated work, bargaining-unit jurisdiction or whether your position has materially changed.

You do not need to wait until workload becomes overwhelming to reach out.

If vacancies, staffing shortages or additional responsibilities are affecting your ability to reasonably perform your job, contact CUPE Local 998.