



### Advice If Assaulted

If you are assaulted at work, you should follow the ten steps outlined below. To ensure a proper disposition, follow these steps **promptly**.

1. Report the incident to your principal immediately.
2. The contract requires the principal to call the police immediately to investigate the assault **if** you wish to file a criminal complaint.

If, due to the assault, you are physically unable to tell the principal you wish to file a criminal complaint, the principal must immediately call the police to investigate.

3. If you are injured, seek medical treatment. For any injury at work to be covered by worker's compensation, medical treatment must be obtained.

4. File a worker's compensation form (Form EB-49) in case of injury. If medical treatment is obtained, provide the name and address of the physician/hospital on the EB-49 form.

5. Notify your EA Chairperson. Your Chairperson will assist you as needed. If you wish, the Chairperson will accompany you to any conferences related to the assault.

(The Chairperson should notify the MTEA office whenever a serious assault occurs.)

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## Representing You in Contract Talks

When bargaining resumes on January 25, your educational assistant (EA) team will renew the fight for a fair contract. The EA team members are: MEAA President Tjuna Eggson; MEAA Vice-President Gwen Anderson; two EA Council members: Phyllis Deal and Ben Duke; Laura Vernon, an EA past president; and Cheryl Barczak, an MTEA staff member (and also an EA past president).

Your team knows how important you are to the education of the MPS students, and it knows how important the negotiated salary, benefits, and working conditions are to you. The many months of delays have strengthened your team's resolve to get the best contract it can for the EA membership.

Don't expect the school board's team to "give" EAs anything. Fact is, it never has during the 44 years that EAs have been an integral part of education in MPS. And today, times are especially tough for all public employees - especially educators.

We'll keep informed of what happens at the bargaining table. Your EA team needs your support - big time!

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## What You Can Do Right Now!

The school board determines its proposals and priority for negotiations with each of the 13 MPS bargaining units - including EAs. The board also ratifies the final agreement.

A majority, five of the nine seats on the school board, are up for election this April. Our union's Political Action Committee (PAC) is recommending we endorse certain candidates for this key election.

Right now, you can exercise your right as an MTEA member to vote to support board candidates who will best support our public schools - and MPS employees like you!

### Voting Process Underway

Our union's PAC endorsement recommendations for school board are listed in the Action Alert! which you should have already received.

**We are conducting the MTEA membership vote online.** Details on how to cast your ballot are in the Action Alert!

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## Reminder: Old Contract Continues

The 2007-08 MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant Contract provisions remain in effect until a new contract is reached. Your salary, health insurance and other benefits, and your rights and working conditions will not change until a new pact is bargained and ratified by the membership and the school board.

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6. File an Incident Referral Form. You should request expulsion, per **school board policy** under "Teacher Recommendation."

7. File an assault report. If the "Report of Assault Suffered by School Personnel" form doesn't provide enough space, add an attachment to provide a complete, detailed description of the incident.

The EA contract mandates that you file the official report form. (See Part V, Section D - p. 68.)

The report form uses legal terms. Technically, **battery** involves "physical contact" and "bodily harm." **Assault** is an "attempt" or "threat" to do bodily harm.

8. If you suffer a personal property loss during an assault (ripped clothing, stolen watch, etc.), file a "Report of Personal Property Loss" form. You may be reimbursed up to \$300.

9. By contract, you are to be paid your full salary for up to one year of time lost due to an assault. Such absences are **not** deducted from your sick leave. You should check your paycheck statements to make certain that deductions are **not** made from sick leave for assault-related absences.

10. If the school administration does not take appropriate disciplinary action or if you do not receive your contractual benefits, please ask your EA Chairperson for assistance.

## Spending Changes for Health Accounts

On January 1, two changes were made in spending from a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or Health Reimbursement Account (HRA):

- ◆ You may no longer use either account for over-the-counter drugs/medicines unless you have a prescription.
- ◆ MPS has discontinued the use of debit cards for direct reimbursement from both accounts.

### IRS Changes on OTC Expenses

IRS determines which health care items are eligible for FSA or HRA reimbursement and now requires a prescription for OTC medicines and drugs except insulin. OTC medical supplies such as Ace bandages, band aids, and contact lens solution remain as eligible expenses without a prescription.

Go to mySHPS.com for an extensive list of eligible expenses. You'll also find an explanation of the new IRS rules with a reader-friendly FAQ.

### Reimbursement Form Required

Because MPS ended the use of SHPS debit cards for direct reimbursement from health care FSA and HRA accounts, you need to submit a SHPS form for all eligible expenses, along with a copy of supporting documentation. Here's how:

- ◆ **First and foremost:** Retain all receipts, bills, EOBs, etc. for eligible expenses. Whether you pay by cash, check or credit card, keep all documents related to health care expenses.
- ◆ Go to mySHPS.com to print a "Health Care Reimbursement Claim Form." You'll find details on completing the form and the required documentation.
- ◆ Fax or mail a copy of your claim form and documentation to SHPS. Be certain to keep the originals for your records.
- ◆ You should receive a payment check in two or three weeks after SHPS receives your claim.

### Tip: Pay Doctor Bill After SHPS Pays You

There are advantages to delaying payment of deductible, co-pay, and co-insurance amounts until after the insurance company pays its portion of the claim. First, you will know the exact amount you're responsible for when you receive the explanation of benefits (EOB). Second, if you submit a claim form to SHPS with a copy of the EOB and wait until you receive reimbursement from SHPS, you'll have the money in hand to pay what you owe.

### When You've Paid an Eligible Expense

For up-front out-of-pocket expenses, such as a prescription drug co-pay, it's a good idea to submit your claim to SHPS as soon as possible. If you routinely fax your SHPS form and a copy of your receipt, you'll be reimbursed sooner and decrease the risk of forgetting to submit a claim.

### Checking Your Account Amount

To find out how much money is available in either your health care FSA or HRA, go to the mySHPS.com and log in at "Participants/Member."

You may also call **1-888-842-8230**, a number dedicated to providing MPS employees with FSA and HRA account data.

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