

GUILD LEADER

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Know your rights:

Last Minute Schedule Changes Limited by Contract

As we approach the summer vacation season, a season that CCI system training in the news department will surely make more even more complicated than normal, we thought it would be good to review with you the contract provisions concerning scheduling.

The contract gives the company wide discretion to set work shifts as it wishes, but it also requires that management provide employees with timely warning of what their shifts are going to be. (However, in the Pre-publishing and Housekeeping Departments, regular schedules are selected by seniority.)

These points are covered in Article 9, Section 5 of the contract. You should have your own copy, or you can see it at the Guild's website, www.riguild.org.

Management is required to post your normal work schedule by Monday of the week before. If management wants to change that schedule, you must be given at least 72 hours (three days) notice.

That three-days notice rule can be waived in emergencies, which the contract defines as an illness or other absence of another employee or some event the publisher could not have foreseen.

A meteor hitting the building is an emergency; a fire is an emergency; these are

things that could affect production and could not be anticipated.

Christmas is not an emergency. Vacations by other workers are not an emergency. A staff shortage due to CCI training is not an emergency. These events are foreseeable and management is expected to manage them. Poor planning on their part does not give them the right to rearrange your life willy-nilly with no notice.

If you are asked to work an extra day or change your hours, this is a schedule change, even if the supervisor neglects to write it in on the formal schedule. Likewise, if you are told you are not needed on a particular day with less than 72 hours notice, unless there is a bona fide emergency, the company still owes you pay for that day. If a revised schedule creates a problem, talk to your supervisor as soon as possible. The earlier you act, the easier it will be for your boss to make adjustments.

Also, be alert to changes in your schedule that might be designed to distribute your hours so as to avoid paying you overtime. We recently resolved a case on this point amicably.

As always, if you have a question or a worry, call the Guild office at 421-9466, President John Hill at 277-7381 or Providence Unit Council Chairman Bob Kerr at 277-7252.