

Employee Pressured into Taking Severance Package Can't Change His Mind Later



"We're closing your office and you have 2 weeks to decide if you want a severance package or a job at another centre." What made that shocking news even harder to take was that it came the day before the employee was scheduled to leave on a long-planned 2-week vacation to India to deal with a family crisis. Reluctantly, he accepted the severance package. But he later tried to take back the decision, claiming he was pressured into making it. While expressing sympathy for the employee and his situation, the federal arbitrator concluded that he really did resign and tossed the grievance. The employee was an "intelligent, thoughtful and mature person," the arbitrator explained, and "I am unable to conclude that the stress he undoubtedly experienced rose to a level sufficient to deprive him of the ability to make a rational decision" [[Bell Canada v Unifor](#), 2021 CanLII 13182 (CA LA), February 24, 2021].