

## National Vice President's Report – CEIU Manitoba Saskatchewan Region – June 2020

Greetings Members,

The months since my last report can charitably be called eventful. With the rise of the pandemic, many of our priorities have shifted. Formal representation has declined with the signing of memorandums of understanding with ESDC and IRCC to place grievances into abeyance during the pandemic. Health and safety has moved to the forefront of our efforts. Starting with hazard prevention measures when COVID19 was declared a global issue to the political action for safe working conditions which lead to the closure of our in person offices and now to the reactivation of in person services and the eventual reoccupation of our physical sites. We have met regularly with the members of our regional and national governance structures and consulted broadly on plans for business resumption, accommodations and health and safety.

Both IRCC and ESDC worked to move employees home where possible. Our members continued serving Canadians as equipment was secured for them. Many employees made at least some use of other paid leave while equipment was secured and arrangements were made to care for family members. With ESDC, we are working nationally on the employer's request for consultation regarding core hours.

Internally, the impact of the pandemic on our Union has been significant. Nationally, we've worked to move significant portions of our operations online. Pamela Mier-Duthie has spearheaded the use of online tools to deliver Local Officer Training earlier this month. This is a first for CEIU and for the Alliance as a whole and we're currently working to incorporate the lessons learned from that session into future training. Paula Nygaard has contributed to our efforts to move union cards online in order to sign up new members, many of whom may seldom, if ever work from a physical office. Ashley Petrin, our new Membership Engagement Officer came to CEIU in mid-March and has produced documents to assist Locals in conducting virtual AGM's.

I continue to sit as a delegate on the WT Regional Labour Management Consultation Committees for ESDC and IRCC as well as the Working Group on Harassment and Discrimination. I sit nationally on the Service Union Management Committee and the National Policy Health and Safety Committee. Within CEIU, I sit on the National Bylaws Committee and assist the National Call Centre Committee. Finally, I am currently co-chairing the WT Region Health and Safety Committee and the PSAC Prairie Region Bylaws Committee for the upcoming PSAC Prairie Regional Convention. While most of our formal governance has been suspended since the WHO's declaration of a pandemic, we are in the midst of restarting many of these activities, recognizing that timely intervention from these tables and prevent issues from being critical. On the side of national governance, we have agreed to a new structure for the next few months.

While it's been a busy time at the Local and Regional levels, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize the hard work of some people. First, our activists who have been the front line of gathering information, addressing questions and concerns from our members and providing representation. Our members who have continued to serve Canadians during these changing times. Finally our staff who have continued to provide support for members and activists. I won't say any of this has been

done tirelessly, because it hasn't. We've all been tired and anxious and worried and we've kept working and excelling anyway. I think that speaks to the character of our activists, members and staff.

In Solidarity,

Chris Gardiner  
National Vice President  
CEIU Manitoba Saskatchewan