



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Yukon Employees' Union withdraws from Collaboration with Yukon Government

Effective immediately, Yukon Employees' Union withdraws from all Government of Yukon joint labour/management committees and policy review boards. We firmly believe in the purpose of these groups and the value of collaboration, but continuing the exercise is a waste of time for us and for our Yukon government counterparts in acting roles who attend these meetings with their hands tied.

When elected last fall, the Yukon's Liberals promised Public Service Excellence as one of their platform commitments. The platform states that a Yukon Liberal government will review hiring/promotion processes to ensure they are open and transparent.

YEU urges the government to act swiftly to show the strong leadership they promised. We ask that they review recruitments for the highest level positions to ensure the recruitment processes were fair, transparent and competitive.

At the Public Service Commission, (the Employer) three top positions are either vacant or temporarily staffed. This department negotiates the Collective Agreements with the Union and sets corporate policy around health and safety, recruitment and disability management. Both the Public Service Commissioner and the Director of Labour Relations are temporarily acting in their positions.

Many high level bureaucrats have acted their way up the ranks, often appointed without appropriate vetting, training or competition. According to the government's online staff directory, at least five Deputy Ministers, seven Assistant Deputy Ministers, seventeen Directors and a multitude of Managers and Supervisors are acting, and we believe this list to be incomplete. Some departments have multiple layers of temporary staff in key program areas – all decisions affecting employees and the public are being made by individuals who are in their positions temporarily and may be learning the ropes.

Employees in acting positions typically do not make decisions having impacts beyond their brief tenure. They are expected to follow vague Human Resource guidelines but receive little or no training in the interpretation and application of the collective agreement. Policies reflecting the intent of government and the ideals of good Labour Relations are not consistently applied, creating an unstable workforce where each unit and department has its own culture and unwritten rules.

The union hopes Yukon's elected leaders will prioritize staffing of all YG positions with a view to developing a public service that is competent and reflects this government's values. Empower those in supervisory roles to apply the government's own staffing policies and the language of the collective agreement in a fair and consistent way. Yukon Employees' Union staff and leadership hope to reconvene with our Yukon Government counterparts soon to begin genuine collaboration.

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