

Bargaining Bulletin No. 5

Canadian Blood Services

Date: *February 16, 2021*

Location: *Saskatoon*

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

Since our last update on February 2, 2021 the Union and the Employer have continued to discuss a return to the bargaining table. The Employer has requested that the parties invite a representative of the Department of Labour Relations and Worker Safety to attend the bargaining sessions and act as a conciliator/facilitator. The Union agreed but only with the proviso that the discussions would only be about getting deal for a new collective agreement. We made it clear that we will not be drawn into any discussions of essential services or how future bargaining will be conducted. Those issues can wait for the next round of bargaining.

Despite the agreement to return to the table no dates have been set and agreeing to bring in a conciliator will inevitably mean a bit more delay but the delay may be worth it if we can use this process to jeop the focus on bargaining for a collective agreement and to enforce the Employer's commitment to bargain.

The Union's bargaining committee met on the 12th of February to review our outstanding proposals, our last position and the Employer's last position and to start forming a plan for final bargaining. The Union has had some success with non-monetary issues including an agreement to address the concerns with changing rest days (it's not all we wanted to achieve but it's an improvement), payment for cancelled shifts and the calculation of Statutory Holiday pay. We also agreed some enhancements to reimbursements and we are considering an Employer counter proposal on pay for additional duties (ISTP training for example). We also agreed several small housekeeping changes some of which the Union hopes will assist in speeding up the grievance process.

The Union still has several outstanding proposals regarding hours of work – especially split shifts and changes inside the posted and confirmed – and we have not resolved the meal break issue yet. The meal break issue is also being addressed through grievances which the Union is working to advance although we will also consider resolving them if that can be done in a way that is fair to our members and provides a resolution that fixes the problem for the future. The Union will continue to review what concessions we can still make to get a deal.

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But the most important thing is getting a monetary proposal for the members to vote on. The Union's last position was for modest increases in every year of a five year deal covering 2017 to 2022. The Employer's last position was a five year deal with increases of 0%, 0%, 1%, 2%, 2%. They based that on the provincial public sector mandate and the agreement that CUPE and some other public sector unions accepted while we were still bargaining. The Union stated throughout that the proposal was not enough and that it was unfair for the Employer to insist that the members at CBS accept a deal negotiated at another table in a different sector. The Employer's offer was discussed with the members and was rejected through a vote for job action. However, SEIU-West held out at provincial bargaining and the mandate eventually moved a bit. SEIU-West has therefore advised CBS that we are willing to talk again and that we are willing to take into account what was agreed at the SEIU-West provincial health care bargaining table. We don't want to copy it. But we will agree to take it into account. What we need to get is a solid proposal from the Employer that we can take back to the members for a vote.

We can discuss the state of bargaining in more detail when we meet on the 16th and the 19th of February and, in the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about bargaining or your work place don't hesitate to call the Member Resource Centre at 1-888-999-7348 ext. 2298 or by using the 'Contact' form on SEIUWEST.ca.

The Union and the bargaining committee members thank you for your patience and congratulate everyone for continuing to provide valuable services to the public through this challenging time.

Your SEIU-West bargaining committee:

SEIU-West members: Heather Dyck (Unit Chair, CBS Saskatoon); Leona Woykin (Unit Vice-Chair – retired/CBS Saskatoon); Kristie Pearton (Unit Vice-Chair, CBS Saskatoon); Jason Coombs (Bargaining Committee member, CBS Regina); Nicole Bork (Bargaining Committee member, CBS Regina); • **SEIU-West staff:** Cam McConnell (Negotiations Officer); Cheryl Champagne (Union Representative) and Shelley Johnson (Union Representative).