



Bargaining Update, March 12, 2021

As you are likely aware, your collective agreement expired on October 31st, 2020. CUPE 8920 started preparations by constructing then sending out our membership surveys in September and reviewing the results early in the new year.

The CUPE 8920 Executive Board then began drafting CUPE's bargaining proposals and brought these proposals to the larger Health Care bargaining council, which includes representatives from NSGEU and Unifor, on February 10th. At that meeting, the unions shared their proposals and began deciding which proposals we would bring forward to the employers (IWK and NSHA). The Council has scheduled two additional meetings to finalize its proposals and strategy.

The Healthcare Bargaining Unit Committee Council, began asking the employers for bargaining dates in December 2020. After several further attempts to secure bargaining dates, the employer recently confirmed bargaining dates. The parties have agreed to exchange proposals on Thursday, April 15th. We have eight additional dates scheduled for bargaining, with the final date scheduled for Thursday, May 13th.

The Executive Council of Health Care Unions, which is made of the leadership of all four unions representing health care workers across the province, and the CUPE 8920 Executive Board both agreed to select Health Care as lead table in bargaining for this round. The Council of Health Care Unions does not expect this round of bargaining will be as prolonged as the previous round, as the councils now have merged collective agreements in place.

As a result of the new Health Authorities Act passed by the provincial government in 2014, which merged the nine district health authorities into one, all four unions (NSGEU, CUPE, Unifor & NSNU) now must bargain in four Councils: Health Care, Administrative Professionals, Support Services, and Nursing. CUPE appoints the Deputy Negotiator for the Health Care Council and NSGEU appoints the Chief Negotiator. It consists of bargaining committee members as follows, NSGEU 6, CUPE 3, Unifor 1 with CUPE holding a Co-Chair role.

CUPE 8920 representatives are:

- Deputy Negotiator is Karen MacKenzie, CUPE National Staff and Acute Care Coordinator
- Co-Chair is Bev Strachan, President CUPE Local 8920
- Dianne Frittenburg
- Cheryl Burbidge

The Health Care Council has also begun work on negotiating essential services agreements with employer representatives from the IWK and NSHA. These agreements determine the number of employees who must remain at work in the event of a strike. The IWK essential service agreement is complete, and the negotiations for the NSHA agreement are ongoing.

We will provide additional information and updates as available.