

BARGAINING UPDATE



GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA LOCAL 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 009 & 012 – ALL STAFF

GSBC Update #10 – Next step is completing Essential Services Agreement

As we mentioned in [our update #9 last week](#), the employer cancelled the negotiations scheduled for Sept. 18 and 19. We agreed that the next step in bargaining is formal mediation, which requires an Essential Services Agreement (ESA). Please understand we cannot move to formal mediation until we have created the ESA and filed it with the Alberta Labour Relations Board.

Essential Services Agreement

The ESA includes two parts. Part A outlines the rules both the workers and the employer must follow when work is interrupted because of a strike or lockout. We have been discussing this for the past 12 months, but your Government Services Bargaining Committee (GSBC) and the employer have a few fundamental disagreements.

We have sent this to the umpire, Deb Howes, who will make her decision within the next few weeks.

This decision is important, as it could impact how effective a strike or lockout will be. If either we or the employer disagree with the decision, we can appeal it; however, this will slow down the process. Because there is a lot at stake with an ESA, your GSBC is determined to get one that protects your full bargaining rights, including an effective strike if necessary.

Part B tells us which classifications are essential, meaning that they must continue to go to work during the strike or lockout to keep the services running. We are almost done deciding Part B, and your GSBC will start reviewing it for approval in a couple of weeks.

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BARGAINING UPDATE



Sept. 18 and 19 meetings

Your GSBC still met on Sept. 18 and 19 to prepare for the next steps in bargaining. We discussed our monetary issues and reviewed how much it will cost to prepare for formal mediation. We also reviewed the possible impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on our workplaces and will get more information once the AUPE Research department has a chance to analyze it.

The employer did join us virtually on Sept. 19 for a short presentation on the ongoing and future status of the campus-based care centres at Lac La Biche, High Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Edmonton, as AUPE requested.

There has been a lot of uncertainty surrounding the present and future status of these services we provide. Although a few questions remain (including whether the High Prairie centre will reopen after a fire in 2023) the employer confirmed they

are committed to maintaining and enhancing youth centres as direct Government of Alberta (GOA) services into the future.

Next steps

Once we secure the ESA, we will work with the employer to choose the mediator we will use for formal mediation. If we cannot mutually agree, either side can apply to Alberta Mediation Services to get a mediator assigned.

Although we've seen this round of bargaining move faster than previous rounds, we understand you want to see the employer decide on key issues like increased pay and secure working conditions. Your GSBC is also keen and ready to move forward, but we must follow the Alberta legislative processes. We are trying to move through this process as quickly as possible.

In the meantime, we continue building the strength and solidarity

of all GOA AUPE members at work sites across the province. Please stay strong, support your committee, continue to talk to your fellow AUPE members, and stay informed—together we will soon be ready to fight for the pay increases and working conditions we deserve.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of your GSBC.

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