

Community social service workers ratify three-year agreement, includes wage increases and significant money for low wage redress

Community social service workers have voted by 85.7 per cent in favour to ratify a new collective agreement that provides significant compensation increases for workers in this sector, while meeting the government mandate of improving the services British Columbians count on.

Community Living workers ratified the tentative agreement by 82.3 per cent. General Services ratified by 95.8 per cent. Indigenous Services (previously Aboriginal Services) ratified by 50.9 per cent. The weighted average ratification vote for all three sub-sectors was 85.7 per cent.

“These agreements restore the sense of respect and value for the critical work that community social services workers do throughout B.C., and the support of our members reflects that,” says CUPE 1936 President and CSSBA negotiating committee member Sheryl Burns. “There is always room for improvement, but we are pleased that the government is committed to acknowledging the caring professionals who deliver these important services.”

Highlights of the General Services and Community Living sub-sector agreements include:

- General wage increases of 2% in each year, plus significant money for low wage redress to address recruitment and retention issues in the sector
- Strong improvements to occupational health & safety including a Provincial Occupational Health and Safety Council
- The restoration of statutory holiday pay for part-time and casual employees
- A non-provincially funded childcare commitment from government to look at fair compensation for early childhood educators
- An improved process to assist the parties in better labour relations
- Enhancements to health and welfare benefit plans to start closing the gap with the health sector
- The renewal of the labour adjustment education fund and funding for health and safety and violence prevention training

Highlights of the Indigenous Services sub-sector agreement includes:

- Changing "Aboriginal" to "Indigenous" in all areas of the collective agreement.
- April 1, 2019 – Temporary Market Adjustment for C6 delegated social workers to Grid 25.
- April 1, 2021 – Temporary Market Adjustment C6 delegated social workers to Grid 26.
- April 1, 2021 – a bump up to the next wage grid in each step of the Growth Progression for delegated social workers.
- Effective April 1, 2021 members will be entitled to maternity and parental leave allowance per the Public Service Agreement.
- The introduction of cultural competence as a determining factor in the appointment policy.
- A framework to discuss cultural competence at labour management.
- Language to highlight the employer's ability to account for an applicant's previous experience as a mechanism to address recruitment and retention concerns for delegated social worker positions.
- Indigenous alternate dispute resolution language broadened to acknowledge the diversity among Indigenous communities and to acknowledge culturally specific processes.

The new collective agreement will be in effect from April 1, 2019 until March 31, 2022.

Please share this update with your co-workers. Members are also encouraged to keep their email information up to date with their respective unions.