

RECOMMENDED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

After a tough round of negotiations beginning April 15th, 2021 and concluding with five days of conciliation, your bargaining committee reached a tentative agreement late on July 6th.

While the negotiations were difficult and the Council of Unions did not achieve all it wanted, the committee members from all three Unions (NSGEU, CUPE & Unifor) believe this is a fair deal for members and are recommending that you vote to ratify the tentative agreement.

Ratification Details

Our ongoing strike vote has now been suspended and has been replaced by a ratification vote. Voting to ratify the tentative agreement will begin **Friday, July 9th** and will close on **Tuesday, July 13th**.

Please check the Cupe 8920 website, the Facebook page or with your Site Representatives for voting times and locations within your Area/Zone.

Meetings

Local 8920 will hold a Town Hall call Thursday evening at 6pm to walk through the changes you see below. There will be a question and answer session at the completion of the presentation to address any questions that arise.

Your committee was able to fend off a number of significant clawbacks in your current collectively agreement language. We were successful in having the employers withdraw proposals that included:

An attempt to expand the distance people outside metro could be re-assigned from 75 to 125 kilometres;

An attempt to reduce the overtime premium for short-notice shift change from 48 hours to 24 hours as well as other changes intended to limit overtime;

The IWK attempted to significantly weaken the current classification language. This language has been in place for decades at the IWK and has been used by employees whose jobs are substantially altered, or changed in any significant way, to seek an independent assessment of whether the employees should receive a corresponding pay increase;

NSH and IWK wanted to create new restricted postings which would force new hires to stay in a job for up to two years;

IWK wanted to reduce pay for its EIBI Clinical Interventionists SLP and PIO current employees at their current rate;

NSH and IWK wanted to eliminate the current right of women on pregnancy leave to earn limited amounts of service that can go toward vacation accrual.

Your bargaining committee could not agree to these types of proposals as they would clearly erode significant rights. The committee was successful in having these proposals withdrawn by the employers.

And, at a time when many provinces in Canada are offering no increases or even planning to roll-back wages and language, your committee was able to achieve wage increases and some language improvements.

Here are the key details of the gains contained in the tentative agreement.

Wage increase:

Economic adjustments totaling **5.6%** (compounded) over three years. Wage adjustments will be applied as follows:

- i. increase of 1.5% to all pay grades on November 1st, 2020
- ii. increase of 1.5% to all pay grades on November 1st, 2021
- iii. increase of 1.5% to all pay grades on November 1st, 2022
- iv. increase of 1.0% to all pay grades on October 31st, 2023

1. Many of Nova Scotia's healthcare workers had fallen behind their counterparts in Newfoundland. This agreement will allow some classifications in Nova Scotia to move ahead of Newfoundland and others to begin to reverse the trend and begin to catch-up. That will all be accelerated if Newfoundland proceeds, as it has said it will, to re-open collective agreements and rollback public-sector wages in the fall.

2. The Council and Employers agreed to create a joint Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Reconciliation Committee, composed of equal representation from the Employer and the Unions (Article 2).

3. The Council and Employers agreed to new language that will require them to work together to improve diversity hirings at the NSH and IWK (Article 10).

4. The NSH and the Council agreed to a new MOA for NSH which will allow employees to ask to reduce their designations temporarily or permanently.
5. The IWK and the Council agreed to the creation of a new MOA for IWK which provides for a one-year trial, renewed upon agreement of the parties, which would allow for permanent staff to ask for temporary reductions in their appointment status.
6. The parties agreed to additional wage increases for Care Team Assistants (CTAs). The Provincial government is attempting to deal with shortages inside and outside acute care for CTAs and was therefore prepared to offer CTAs additional increases amounting to 2% on date of ratification and 3% on June 1st, 2022.
7. NSH agreed to level up the shift and weekend premium of CUPE and Unifor employees to the levels currently paid to NSGEU members. That will mean a 10-cent increase per hour effective the date of ratification (Article 34).
8. NSH and IWK agreed to increases in standby pay effective Oct. 31st, 2023. This will see standby increase from \$16.21 for each eight-hour period to \$20. Standby on a holiday will increase from \$32.40 to \$40 (Article 16).
9. NSH agreed to an MOA matching paramedic rates of pay to those of IOUE retroactive to Nov. 1st, 2020.
10. The parties agreed that Employees designated to perform duties for a temporary period, will now receive Acting Pay after one-shift as opposed to three or more consecutive days (Article 34).
11. NSH and IWK agreed that any improvements to vacation carryover agreed to at the nursing bargaining table will apply to the healthcare bargaining unit, as well.
12. The parties agreed to allow to further ease the transfer of seniority between the NSH and IWK. The new Article 1.03(b)(iii) will read;

At the IWK: Should a member of any bargaining unit at the IWK who is also concurrently a member of any bargaining unit at the Nova Scotia Health Authority be the successful candidate for a permanent position in the IWK Health Care Bargaining unit, that Employee shall keep or transfer the greater of their IWK or NSH seniority, provided they terminate their permanent employment with NSH, to their new Health Care Bargaining Unit position at the IWK.

At the NSH: Should a member of any bargaining unit at NSH who is also concurrently a member of any bargaining unit at the Izaak Walton Killam Health Centre be the successful candidate for a permanent position in the NSH Health Care Bargaining unit, that Employee shall keep or transfer the greater of their IWK or NSH seniority, provided they terminate their permanent employment with IWK, to their new Health Care Bargaining Unit position at NSH.

13. The parties agreed to adjust the dates by which Employees will make their vacation requests from February 1st to January 15th and August 1st to July 15th. The IWK has agreed that it will produce its closure memos in advance of the vacation request dates (Article 17).

14. The NSH and IWK agreed to designate July 1st as the Canada Day holiday. This lines up the Healthcare bargaining unit with the Administrative Professional, Support Services and Nursing bargaining units at the NSH and IWK. It will help avoid confusion when Canada Day falls on a weekend (Article 18).

15. The parties agreed to inclusion of Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence in the IWK and NSH collective agreements. This leave is in accordance with the Labour Standards Code. The parties also increased the leaves allowed for Compassionate Care and for Parents of a Critically Ill Child to match corresponding increases in Labour Standards (Article 19).

16. The IWK and the Council agreed for clarity to clearly define a complete week for the purposes of vacation selection during prime time. The new IWK article 17.06 (d) reads "For the purposes of this Article, a "complete week" is one calendar week running from Monday at 00:01 hours to Sunday at 24:00 hours. Regardless of the amount of vacation requested by an Employee during each complete week, a junior Employee will not be granted vacation above a senior Employee."

17. The parties amended Article 28.02 at NSH so that mileage rates are specifically tied to the Civil Service mileage rate as they are at the IWK.

18. The parties agreed to a new MOA at NSH and IWK to allow for improved recruitment by allowing the employers to provide additional vacation to a newly hired employee if required to assist with recruitment and with agreement of the union.

19. The Council agreed with NSH and IWK that part-time and casual employees may revise their availability forms one month earlier than had previously been the case. That is:

- i. Feb. 1st (rather than March) for April to June
- ii. May 1st (rather than June 1) for July to September and
- iii. Nov. 1st (rather than December) for January to March.