



Health Care Support Workers Bargaining Update Filing for Conciliation

Dear CUPE member,

The Council of Health Support Unions Bargaining Committee has an update on the status of negotiations in bargaining your new collective agreement with Nova Scotia Health and IWK following our recent discussions with the employers.

Filing for conciliation

Bargaining has been very slow and frustrating for your entire committee, and we understand your frustration as well. To avoid further delay, the committee made the decision to file for conciliation. In discussing this decision at the table with the employer, the unions agreed to a joint filing for conciliation – this means both parties agree that an impasse has been reached in bargaining and that both parties are requesting the assistance of an outside mediator as agreed to by the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration.

The joint process involves both parties submitting outstanding and agreed-to articles to the conciliator to help in making the process easier and quicker.

Why is conciliation necessary?

In previous updates, we have shared that the committee was able to develop a very comprehensive wage package and presented it to the employers on December 5, 2024. The wage package included significant monetary increases for all the classifications and focused on your integral role in the health care team.

While there has been some agreement to some wage provisions, the employers' counteroffer is inadequate, and we feel it dismisses your vital role in providing services all Nova Scotians need and rely on.

As the bargaining committee and the employers' proposals are currently too far apart, we feel it is in the members' best interest to proceed to conciliation.

What's next?

Your committee presented a defined monetary and language package to the employers on March 19, 2025. This package will help guide your committee through the conciliation process. Your committee has worked extremely hard on your behalf to fight for the best possible agreement, and we hope the assistance of a conciliator will help us reach that goal.

Premier Houston promised to fix healthcare, but delaying bargaining with an early election, then not delivering a financial mandate that recognizes the vital role your work plays in the health care team *fails to fix health care*.

Health care cannot be fixed in pieces, showing more respect for some groups than others. The ENTIRE health care team requires equal respect and dignity, with wages and benefits that demonstrate that.

Your bargaining committee recognizes the challenges you are facing with the rising cost of living, inflation, and general economic struggles in these uncertain times and is determined to have those factors reflected in your wages, even if the Houston government disagrees.

Essential Services

The essential services negotiation process has not paused. That committee has met several times with additional dates scheduled through March. That separate negotiation is moving along and will allow you to be in a legal strike position if need be.

Your committee wishes to thank you for your patience and continued support and will continue to work extremely hard on your behalf to conclude the best possible collective agreement. We know the hard work you all do every day and what issues are important to you. The committee is bringing those concerns to the bargaining table to represent you all.

If you have any questions or concerns about the bargaining process, please contact your Area VP.