



BULLETIN

Community social service workers approve new contracts

October 17, 2011

British Columbia's frontline community-based social service workers have approved their new collective agreements. The vote was 88% in favour for General Services and 79% in favour for Community Living Services.

"This agreement offers important improvements for workers who support children, women, adults with developmental disabilities, and other vulnerable members in our communities," says James Cavalluzzo, Chair of the Community Social Services Bargaining Association. "The quality of care and support we are able to provide is directly impacted by the workers' job security and working conditions," says Cavalluzzo.

The agreement improves job security and fair work practices for community-based social service workers, such as bumping, job selection language and bullying.

In addition, the government has approved a \$600,000 retraining grant for workers in the sector, who face constant upheaval from group home closures, cutbacks in agencies that serve women in crisis, people with disabilities, and children with special needs. The new agreement was ratified effective October 14, 2011 and runs until March 31, 2012.

Bargaining demands were backed up by an 82% strike mandate from the 15,000 unionized workers in May.

The Community Social Services Bargaining Association includes nine unions representing about 15,000 workers employed by 220 agencies across British Columbia.

The B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) is the lead union in the sector with over 10,000 members. CUPE, HEU, HSA are the next largest followed by USW, UFCW, CSWU, CLAC and BCNU.

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