

BULLETIN

Five-year tentative agreement reached in community social services

December 3, 2013

The Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) has reached a tentative agreement for the 11,000 union members working in community-based social services across the province.

The five-year agreement, which would be in place to March 31, 2019, significantly closes the wage gap between workers in this sector and those with equivalent positions in the community health sector.

"With this tentative agreement, we are finally making real wage gains for community social workers who support vulnerable families in British Columbia," said HSA President Val Avery.

Highlights of the tentative agreement include:

WAGES:

- Wage comparability adjustments over five years for members with occupations similar to those covered by the Community Health agreement. These wage adjustments will affect about three-quarters of all workers in the sector, plus;
- Four general wage increases of one percent each over the term of the agreement, plus;
- Wage adjustments to address specific job classifications within the joint job evaluation plan, plus;
- An Economic Stability Dividend in four of the five years that may provide further wage improvements dependent on the performance of BC's economy;

BENEFITS:

- Modest improvements to health benefits, including vision care.
- Also agreed to by the parties is the establishment of a Joint Benefits Working Group that will monitor and make recommendations to control the costs of benefits in the community social services sector;

The tentative agreement also includes modest increases to mileage and meal allowance reimbursements.

In addition, current provisions for employment security are maintained for the five years of the agreement.

In addition to BCGEU, which represents a majority of members working under the collective agreement, HSA, BCGEU, CUPE, HEU, and six other unions together make up the multi-union Community Social Services Bargaining Association. HSA represents 800 members working in the sector.

A comprehensive report along with information on ratification balloting in the coming days will be available for HSA members covered by the CSSBA collective agreement.

The BC Government and Services Employees Union (BCGEU) entered into early coordinated talks with the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA), Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC), and the provincial government in order to find common ground to reach settlements at three major tables. The BCGEU's Provincial Executive approved early talks with government. The contracts being negotiated were the

Community Social Services, Community Health, and the public service master agreement.

HOW TO VOTE:

An information package has been sent out to community social service members by email or Canada Post. Information and voting meetings will be held over the next few weeks, and members are now being contacted with information about where and when they are being held.

- [Full list of CSS contract information and voting meetings](#)

If you have any questions please contact SGeoghegan@hsabc.org.

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