



BARGAINING UPDATE

After several frustrating rounds of bargaining and no sight of an economic proposal from the employer, our team declared that we were at an impasse. This is never done without a serious necessity to do so, but frankly, the disrespect over wages, and lack of movement on key items such as work/life balance, telework and job protections left us no option.

In our opinion it was clear that the employer wasn't interested in negotiating items that were important to our membership leading us to believe that they did not have the mandate to give our demands serious attention. Again, these talks were also void of any economic proposal. To put this disrespect in perspective, the majority of the public service who are in negotiations, many of which are also at an impasse, have at least seen the employer's economic proposals. Having not seen them, we have no choice but to move this process forward and eventually get to the Public Interest Commission to present our case and finally hear theirs.



Make no mistake, the employer by this inaction makes it crystal clear that the inflation and cost of living that is hammering us all doesn't matter to them. It yells from the top of the mountains that all the good work you did during the pandemic and in every other day of your career doesn't deserve a raise. It speaks volumes that offers (however offensive they were) have been made to other bargaining teams but CRA can't make our members an offer. This has happened before. It is a broken record, it is Bill Murray's Ground Hog Day, it is Yogi Berra's "déjà vu all over again."

What is most frustrating is that we have to go through this process again. We have always been ready to negotiate, and it is of no help to our membership to have the employer delay and delay and delay. BUT, it serves them great purpose. While it will ultimately be grossly miscalculated (as history has continuously shown) – the employer would like nothing more than the membership to get angry and as time goes on the membership asks "what is the union doing"? Well, we put economic proposals on the table that reflected the current economic state. We walked them through our proposals on work/life balance to hear nothing but crickets, we made job security a priority by demanding no more contracting out (our membership can proudly do any new work that is needed – we already proved this) – but the employer doesn't believe that's a priority.

All this to say we have your backs, we will not give up the fight, and we will get you the respect you deserve through enhanced provisions and better salary. As this process moves along, please be sure to sign up for email notifications and if you have any questions please reach out to your local president. Stay in communication with the union for any information sessions or gatherings. We will be lobbying key MPs and will always welcome your help!

Adam Jackson
2nd Vice-President, Chair of the Bargaining Team

**SI VOUS PRÉFÉREZ RECEVOIR CETTE PUBLICATION EN FRANÇAIS,
VEUILLEZ VOUS ADRESSER À VOTRE PRÉSIDENT- E DE SECTION LOCALE**

YOU ASKED US ABOUT BARGAINING

Q. In reviewing the wage proposal presented by the Union of Taxation Employees (UTE) to the employer for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 of 4.5% (after a market adjustment), 8% and 8%, should I not be concerned that this will just add to increasing the inflation that all of us are now faced with?

A. There are varied opinions amongst economists regarding the impacts of salary increases and inflation. This is never more apparent than what we see in the current economic times.



One theory, wage-push inflation, suggests that inflation occurs due to wage increases. Simply put this theory suggests that higher wages will cause businesses to raise prices on the goods they produce in order to maintain their profit margins which in turn can cause inflation. If one looks at the current inflationary trends of 7 to 8% and compares that to the two to four times increase in profits for many of the largest corporations in Canada, this is not the case of just trying to maintain a profit margin.

This clearly suggests that the main reason for the significant increase in inflation is purely greed amongst the corporations and NOT employees asking for salary increases to maintain their current standard of living. No

individual should lose purchasing power by receiving salary increases which are significantly less than inflation.

To quote the Public Service Alliance of Canada in a recent article:

Public sector jobs act like a safety net when inflation soars by supporting good stable jobs and keeping our economy healthy. For every dollar spent in the public sector, between \$1.09 and \$1.28 is added to the Canadian economy. This, according to a report from l'Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomique (IRIS).

IRIS goes on to say that contrary to statements made by numerous bank economists, salary increases negotiated for public sector workers have no direct impact on inflation. This is a direct correlation to the fact that public sector workers provide services to Canadians that for the most part are not based on a for-profit model.

The wage demand proposed by UTE is very realistic based upon the current economic realities and allows our members to meet rising costs in order to maintain a standard of living which appears to be exacerbated by greed. The union's proposal will not have any significant impact on inflation but will ensure that our members are able to maintain fair wages to support themselves and their family.

Gary Esslinger
Chair, Communications Committee

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

First of all, I hope that you have taken advantage of the beautiful summer season to take a well-deserved break from work to spend some quality time with your loved ones. These special moments of relaxation, joy and rest are very important, both for your physical and mental well-being.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has followed Treasury Board's lead and suspended its policy on mandatory vaccination against COVID-19 as of June 20, 2022 until further notice. This is good news for our members who were directly affected by the implementation of this policy. Indeed, employees who had been placed on administrative leave without pay have been reinstated. As you know, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) filed two (2) policy grievances against this policy last March at our request. As for the policy itself, it is not clear whether or not the employer intends to reinstate it in the future. We will monitor these matters closely and keep you informed of any significant developments.

Obviously, the health and safety of all our members is THE top priority of our union. We continue to have frequent discussions with the employer's representatives to ensure that all necessary measures are put in place to ensure that all workplaces, whether in the Agency's offices or at home, are safe. In addition, we hold regular meetings with the employer regarding the potential return of a growing number of our members to its workplaces.

At the last meeting between our bargaining team and the employer's team, our team unfortunately had no choice but to declare an impasse in negotiations and asked the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board to help us move negotiations forward. The scenario that occurred in the last round of bargaining has been repeated again this time. This is unacceptable and downright insulting, especially when one considers the extraordinary work you have done since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in administering not only the tax programs but also the emergency financial assistance programs of the federal government. We deserve much more respect and consideration from them. Enough is enough!

I ask you to show the CRA and Treasury Board that we will not give in to them and that we all fully support our bargaining team. We need to stand strong and united. In order for you to show your support for the bargaining team, you will find a poster with two slogans inside this mailing. I ask that you use this poster and display it prominently in your workplace and at work-related meetings or when asked at union events. It is important that the employer sees and knows that you are always thinking about bargaining and that you are steadfast in your support of your bargaining team.

On another note, I would like to inform you that our Locals will be holding their Annual General Meetings (AGMs) again this fall. Some Locals will continue to hold their AGMs virtually while others are choosing to resume holding them in person. As public health authorities are no longer imposing health restrictions, the decision to hold their AGM in a particular format rests with each of our local executives, as is normally the case.

I would also like to remind you that our Union strongly recommends that all members file a Notice of Objection to the Notice of Assessment from the CRA for the year 2021 regarding the portion of reported income that represents general damages paid under a settlement agreement negotiated by

**I SUPPORT MY
BARGAINING TEAM**



**J'APPUIE MON
ÉQUIPE DE NÉGO**

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HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR LOCAL AND PSAC ID

Did you keep the envelope that this newsletter came in? If so, take a moment to look at it now.

Just above your name and address are two other important pieces of information. The first is your local number and the second is your PSAC ID.

XXXXX 1234567
Jane Smith
123 Any Street
City, Prov A1A 1A1

If your local number is displayed as XXXXX, it means that you have not been allocated to a local yet. Please contact us at membership@ute-sei.org and include your PSAC ID, your name, your home address, personal phone number, personal email address, your job title, the office you consider your physical work location as well as the best way to reach you. One of our employees will be in touch as soon as possible.

If you ever need to contact a local representative, having made note of your local number will help you when you visit our website at <https://www.ute-sei.org/en/about/locals>. You will select your region first, and when the list of local names and numbers is displayed, select your local's number. We recommend that you bookmark this page to make it easier to find in the future. Should you ever have a problem at work or a question about your collective agreement, this page will have the contact information for your local executive and stewards.

Susan Duncan
Communications Committee

CHOOSING A RETIREMENT DATE

When to retire? The CRA website has all the information you need to determine when you are eligible for a pension and how much it will be. It is recommended reading for anyone, not just those preparing to retire. Once you have made the decision to retire, however, exactly what day you retire on can be an important consideration.

December versus January. Upon turning 65, employees who are receiving a Public Service Superannuation (PSSA) benefit, or who are entitled to Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP) disability benefits, will have their superannuation benefits reduced by the following pre-determined formula, prescribed by law:

*.00625 x number of years of contributory service x average maximum
pensionable earnings, or average salary, whichever is lower*

If you are considering a retirement date of early in the year, it may be worthwhile to roll the date back to December 30th. Since your first day of retirement is the first day after you resign, your retirement date would be December 31st. This suggestion can reduce the effects of CPP/QPP integration (detailed above), which is calculated at age 65.

For example, if you retire on January 1st, 2023, the reduction formula adds another year to the "number of years of contributory service", increasing the amount of the reduction. Had you left your employment on December 30th, 2022, the reduction would be less, as your number of years of contributory service would be one year less. In dollar terms, that means that, assuming you retire

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after age 65, you could be getting a higher pension, indexed to the cost of living, for the rest of your life.

One of the misconceptions for employees considering retirement early in the year is that they think that earned, but unused, vacation pay or compensatory time owed will be paid immediately. They are intending to ensure the payments are taxed in the lower income year. However, with a retirement date of December 30th, there is little (if any) chance that your lump sum payments will be paid in the current

year. More likely, these amounts would be paid, and therefore taxable, in the new year.

Indexation. The PSSA pension plan provides indexation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), calculated on complete months of retirement. For example, if you resign June 29th 2022, you get indexation (6/12ths of the annual indexation), starting on January 1st, 2023, for the 6 out of 12 months that you were retired in 2022. Had your last day of work been June 30th 2022, your actual retirement date would be July 1st and you would get 5/12ths of indexation on January 1st 2023. You only receive indexation on *complete* months of retirement, hence the suggestion to have your last day at work one day before the end of the month. If we assume indexation of 2% on a pension income of \$30,000, indexation for a full year would be an increase of \$600/year or \$50/month. Using this example, with a resignation date of June 29th, 2022 (one day before month end), a retiree would see an increase in pension of \$300/year or \$25/month (6 out of 12 months) the following year. Had the resignation date selected been June 30th, the increase in pension for indexation would have been \$250/year or \$20.84/month (5 out of 12 months). A modest increase of \$4.16 per month, but for the rest of your life.

Monday versus Friday. Retire on a Monday versus Friday, as you have now picked up an extra 3 days of pensionable service but have only had to work one extra day. This is even more effective if the Monday is a statutory holiday. In that case, working on the Tuesday, rather than leaving on Friday, ensures that you'll earn 4 extra days of pensionable service.

First 10 working days of the month. If you work the first 10 days of the month you are entitled to your annual leave (pro-rated of course), as well as your bilingual bonus for that month. Leave can be taken or paid out, at your discretion.

Wait for a pay increase. Let's recognize that this will have little impact on your pension income as your pensionable earnings are averaged over 5 years. On the other hand, your supplementary death benefit would reflect the increased pay scale. The question is though, does it make sense to defer your pension until such time as your salary increases? But that is a question that is best answered individually.

Taken one by one, these potential increases to your pension may seem small, but with time and indexation, they could add up to a significant increase.

Melanee Jessup
President, Local 00015 Kitchener
Communications Committee

A MATTER OF CHOICE

The role of unions is to support its membership and protect the rights of workers. On a wider scale unions lobby for broader social changes viewed as supporting workers and Canadians within society.

The US Supreme Court decision to overturn a longstanding fundamental decision taking away a woman's decision to make her own informed health care decisions has created ripples felt around the world.

We understand that issues such as this stir up very strong emotional responses from persons on both sides. The union recognizes this and respects the individual positions taken, but we support the principal of choice and support the voices of those who care deeply about individual choice as is reflected in the following article.

*Gary Esslinger
Chair, Communications Committee*

THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN TO US HERE IN CANADA

That could never happen to us here in Canada.... We say that so many times as multiple events take place in the U.S.A. The same is true in many countries around the globe where governments seem to be turning back the clock on gains and freedoms achieved for citizens especially women and minorities.

The most recent being the repeal of Roe v. Wade by the US Supreme Court. Roe v. Wade had guaranteed a woman's right to choose her own health choices including access to abortion services for almost 50 years.

How is Canada any different? Only a woman knows what the right choice for her is, and all avenues for female health and reproduction need to be provided to individuals safely without barriers.

Canada currently has no laws regarding abortion. It is considered the same as any other medical procedure and regulated through provincial and territorial governments and professional bodies. Without proper oversight, this could lead to significant power in the hands of the provinces who could draft legislation and place limitations on health care access for women, such as requiring more than one doctor's concurrence or approval, having to access an abortion in a provincial hospital instead of a clinic and legal timeframes for the procedure or outright banning of the procedure in certain jurisdictions.

There are many things we can do, such as lobbying at the provincial and federal level in order secure and improve access for Canadian women.

1. Strengthen the Canada Health Act (CHA).
The CHA must be improved to ensure the provinces do not introduce or have administrative fees or fail to cover the cost of travel in situations where health care facilities are not locally available.
2. Provinces and Territories must respect the Canada Health Act and ensure that health care providers and institutions have the infrastructure they need to provide abortion care. This is as simple as proper billing codes and access to ultrasounds, and policies for timely care.
3. Create the promised Health Canada web portal that will feature accurate, unbiased information on sexual and reproductive health and rights and will address abortion disinformation.
4. Request that the federal government increase Federal Health Transfers with ties to the

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expansion of reproductive and sexual health services across the country.

5. Demand that the Health Canada Sexual and Reproductive Health Fund have funding established on a permanent and ongoing basis. Currently this funding was introduced in 2022 however it is set to expire in 2024.

There is a great misconception that abortions are carelessly used as a form of birth control by young unwed mothers. This is not the case. More than half the women who become pregnant were using some form of contraception. Half of the women seeking abortions already have children at home and understand the demands additional children will create, and 75% of women live at or below the poverty line. (While these are American Statistics, it is likely that statistics in Canada are similar)

As Canadians we need to ensure that health choices for women are left in the hands of those impacted by these decisions and not left to individuals who have no personal stake in the matter other than their own personal opinions. Unfortunately, this is becoming more prevalent in more governments and individuals in Canada, the USA and many other countries around the world.

Mel Lucier
Member of the Equal Opportunities Committee

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the PSAC as compensation for stress, aggravation and pain and suffering due to the Phoenix pay system. For our members living in Quebec, you must also file a notice of objection against the notice of assessment from the Agence du revenu du Québec (ARQ). You will find all the necessary information, including suggested wording, on our website (www.ute-sei.org) to help you file a notice of objection. We published messages to this effect on March 3 and July 28.

In August, the PSAC announced that it had successfully negotiated, with the other bargaining agents, major improvements to the Public Service Health Care Plan. The new agreement will take effect on July 1, 2023. As for the negotiations on the Dental Plan, the PSAC has filed an unfair labour practice complaint against Treasury Board for refusing to negotiate a new dental plan for tens of thousands of federal public service workers. For more information, I invite you to visit our website.

Furthermore, I would like to stress that improvements to the Dental Plan and the Public Service Health Care Plan are negotiated separately, outside of collective agreement negotiations. I am taking the time to mention this because we regularly receive requests for bargaining demands on these plans even though we cannot negotiate the terms of the plans during contract negotiations.



I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for all the good work you continue to do, for your exemplary dedication to the people of Canada and for your continued support of your union.

Together we are strong. Never forget that!

Stay safe and take good care of yourself and your loved ones.

In solidarity,

Marc Brière
National President

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WHAT IT IS AND WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND

With our new normal, most members will continue to work from home either full time or in a hybrid format. Opportunities to meet your Executive, and even other members, are few or almost non-existent. Meetings such as an AGM either done in person or while not perfect virtually, give members an opportunity to connect with other members, speak to or ask questions of their local executives or hear from the national leaders of the union on matters of importance to the membership.

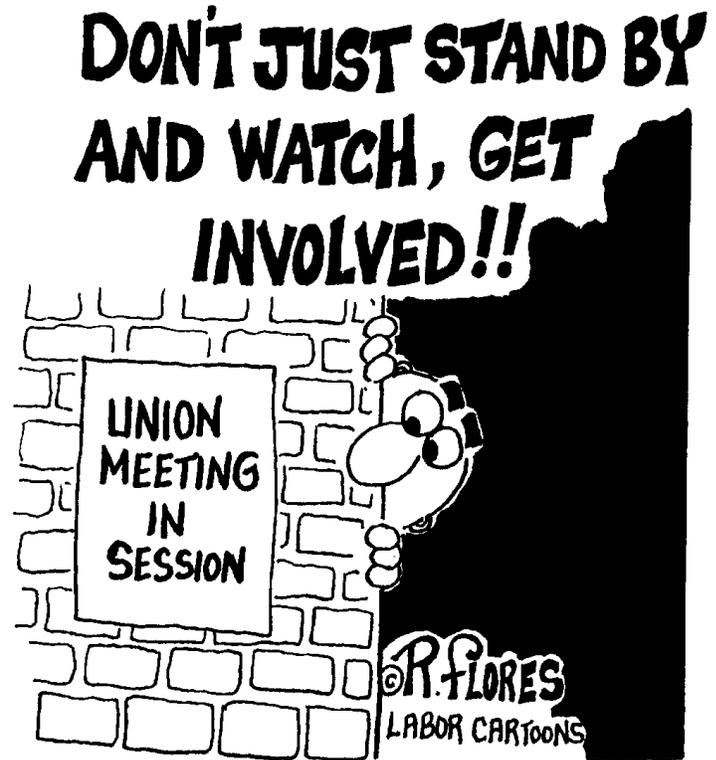
Annually your Local Executive will send the membership an invitation to attend the upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM). But what is the AGM and why should you attend?

The AGM is required for the Executive to report on all matters that have taken place during the previous year. Most importantly, this includes financial reports of the local's expenditures and income received, mostly from the membership dues. Information is also provided charting the direction of the local for the upcoming year. Decisions, which include electing officers to the Local executive, are made by the members who attend the meeting. The rules that govern the operation of the local are generally contained in by-laws that can only be changed with the support of the membership and must be amended at the AGM. All these things are very important member responsibilities.

For any of these crucial activities to happen, there must be a quorum of members attending the AGM. A quorum is a small number or percentage of members who must be in attendance to make any of these decisions. The other side of quorum is that a relatively small number members could make decisions that affect all members, such as electing officers, making changes to by-laws or even increasing dues.

Attending an AGM is a small time commitment that can provide huge benefits, for you and for all members. Plan to attend.

Melanee Jessup
President, UTE Local 00015 Kitchener
Communications Committee



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that all address changes should be done online at <https://www.ute-sei.org/en/for-members/change-address> or via email to membership@ute-sei.org. If you do not have access to e-mail, please pass it on (with your PSAC ID) to a local representative or mail it directly to the National Office at 233 Gilmour Street, Suite 800, Ottawa ON K2P 0P2.



CRA 2022 WORKPLACE CHARITY CAMPAIGN

As usual, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will hold its Workplace Charitable Campaign this fall. And once again, the Union of Taxation Employees (UTE) fully supports this campaign.

UTE national officers will participate in the launch and promotion of the 2022 Charity Campaign with senior Agency officials.



Our Regional Vice Presidents will be doing the same with their CRA Regional counterparts and I strongly encourage our Locals to participate as well.

Of course, we once again encourage our members to be generous by continuing to contribute to the charities of their choice.

You can donate through the CRA's 2022 Charitable Campaign or directly to the United Way or the UTE's charity of choice, International Children's Awareness Canada (ICA) (see below).

Together, let's continue to make a difference in people's lives! For more information, please contact one of the members of your local executive.

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S AWARENESS (ICA) CANADA

International Children's Awareness (ICA) Canada is a small non-profit organization dedicated to the long-term development of countries in need. At any given time, ICA has several projects on the go and is seeking funding to undertake additional projects. ICA projects help small communities and families in developing nations.

ICA is a registered charity in Canada (registration no. 887858660RR0001). The organization is made up entirely of volunteers, which means that 100% of donations are used for projects and not for salaries or administrative costs.

We would like to ask our members to support this worthy organization by making their donations directly to ICA Canada or through the CRA 2022 Charitable Campaign.



Thank you so much for your great generosity!

In Solidarity,

Marc Brière
National President



WHAT IS THE EO COMMITTEE?



EO stands for equal opportunity, you may have noticed on job posters the employer uses EE or employment equity. These two terms are similar but not the same. Employment equity is a term used to include women, Indigenous employees, racially visible employees, and employees with disabilities. The employer “commits” to ensuring the four groups are represented when staffing positions. They do this by using data supplied to them by the Government of Canada to show where there are “gaps” in the different groups and position being staffed.

Equal Opportunity includes those four groups as well as 2SLGBTQI+. The EO Committee’s main responsibility is planning and hosting equal opportunity conferences for the members. Through the conferences, the committee educates the members on the struggles and successes of the groups. We do this by providing real life speakers and interactive sessions to bring awareness of what is happening in our world today and what has happened in our world in the past. Through these conferences we can show how we have come full circle by cultivating changes.

The committee is formed or changed every three years. The committee is comprised of a Chair and Co-Chair who are Regional Vice Presidents. There is a representative for each group and these positions are filled by a call out to all members, so everyone can apply. The final seat is held by a member who represents the presidents, this position is also open to all members and is selected by a vote of the presidents. The committee serves a three-year term and plans and hosts three regional and one national EO conference during their term. This term has been challenging for the committee as we have had to meet, plan, and host three regional conferences virtually. We are looking forward to getting together face to face to host the national conference in Ottawa in October.

So, this leads me to why this committee is so important. You have probably heard or possibly felt “I’m not racist” or “those things don’t happen in Canada” but I assure you those things do happen in Canada and quite often all around us. I had the privilege of attending the national EO conference in 2019 and I can honestly say it was one of the best things I have done during my career at CRA. Over the two and a half days I shed a lot of tears (both happy and sad). The amount of learning and understanding you gain in those two and half days is amazing. I feel I left that conference a much better person and I realized just how privileged I am. It really ignited a passion in me, and I knew I wanted to be a part of it so when the email came, I took the time to apply, and I am a much better human for it.

You can join the UTE mailing list and access your current EO committee by visiting the website <https://www.ute-sei.org/en>

*Jackie Robertson, Women’s Representative EO committee
President, Local 20028 Victoria*