

# MEMBER UPDATE

## AUPE CONTINUES TO PUSH EMPLOYERS TO HAND OVER PANDEMIC PAY

Union files 51 grievances and starts to get action from employers

It has been two months since the Alberta government announced that some Health-Care Aides (HCAs) would be getting a \$2 per hour boost to wages during the COVID-19 pandemic, but some employers are still holding out, while others are failing to follow the rules.

AUPE filed 51 grievances with employers during the week of June 8-12 for facilities all across Alberta.

Some of these were filed against employers who have failed to pay the pandemic money, some against employers who paid but didn't follow the appropriate process. All of these grievances were related to the pandemic-pay issue.

### **GRIEVANCES STARTING TO WORK**

AUPE's actions last week are beginning to pay off. Eight of the grievances we filed have already been withdrawn, because the grievances prompted discussions which led to the employer and the union signing letters of understanding to get the money to members.

### **WHY IS AUPE FILING GRIEVANCES AGAINST SOME EMPLOYERS WHO ALREADY PAID?**

AUPE is not and never will be opposed to wage increases for members. We will strongly oppose efforts by employers to illegally bypass collective bargaining agreements.

The only way to ensure that the pay raises are applied fairly and promptly is for the union to be involved. Not all employers can be trusted to do the right thing. This program has been a failure because some employers have tried to bypass your union.

On May 19, Health Minister Tyler Shandro announced \$14 million per month retroactive to March 15 was being given to private providers, on top of the funding previously announced on April 20. Clearly, funding is available to support all workers at these facilities.

While some employers engaged with AUPE to work out the details and provide clarity to our members about when these raises are coming and who is getting them, many employers have not.

### **WHO ELSE DESERVES PANDEMIC PAY?**

AUPE is fighting not only to get the pandemic pay to the Health-Care Aides (HCAs) who are supposed to get it, but to get pandemic pay for all front-line workers in health care and government services who are putting themselves at risk during the pandemic.

This money should go to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), to housekeeping workers and food-service workers.

It should also be extended to the entire health-care system including hospitals, and to the full spectrum of continuing care, including assisted-living facilities, lodges, group homes and home care.

It should go to social workers, correctional officers and many more on the front lines.

It is shameful that the Alberta government is seeking to divide workers by their classification, employer or worksite to give a little money to some and nothing to many more.

It is shameful the government has allowed some employers to play games and withhold money that is owed to workers.

Other jurisdictions in Canada have done far more to recognize the risks and sacrifices being made by front-line workers. They have boosted pay more than in Alberta and have made that boost available to more workers.

Alberta can and should do better.

### **STILL HAVING PROBLEMS? CALL YOUR MEMBERSHIP SERVICES OFFICER**

If you are a health care aide and have not yet received this pay retroactive to April 20, or if your employer has not provided clear communication on when it is coming to health care aides, please call AUPE immediately at 1-800-232-7284.

Tell us where you work and the person answering your call will forward you to your Membership Services Officer.