

MEMBER UPDATE

LEGAL AID SOCIETY

LOCAL: 118
CHAPTER: 018, 019
ALL STAFF

JULY 16, 2020

CLASSIFICATION ARBITRATION DECISION MADE

On July 3, arbitrator Deborah Howes released her decision in the matter of the wage rates for Certificate and Tariff Officers (CTOs) and Contact Centre Intake Officers (CCIOs). The decision upholds the wage scale proposed by Legal Aid for any employees hired since Feb. 11, 2020.

You can read the full decision at aupe.org.

Obviously, we are disappointed with this outcome, since AUPE had argued the CCIOs and CIAOs were doing substantially the same work and should therefore be paid the same rate. The arbitrator did not look in detail at the wage rates for CTOs, since the parties agreed that whatever decision the arbitrator arrived at for CCIOs would also apply to CTOs. AUPE is in the process of reviewing the arbitrator's decision for possible errors and considering our legal options.

Just to be crystal clear—no one's wages will go down as a result of this decision. However, this decision upholds a two-tier wage scale that pays newer employees less for doing the same jobs.

We must prepare ourselves to challenge this inequity in our next round of bargaining, and to improve the situation of longer serving employees, many of whom have no room on the wage scale to move up, no matter how many years of service they've given to this employer.

It is important to remember that the only reason we were able to protect the wages of grandfathered employees was because of the protection we have by virtue of belonging to a union. It is worth noting Legal Aid is reviewing the wages of non-union staff, who don't have the same protections in place should the employer decide to rollback their wages.

Our union is only as strong as we make it, though. So it's vitally important that all members do their part to stay informed and engaged on matters that affect us, especially as we prepare to bargain our next collective agreement. Our current agreement expires Dec. 31, 2020, although it will remain in effect until a new agreement is reached to replace it.

We are in the process of preparing to hold an online Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Edmonton members. At that meeting, we will be electing bargaining committee members as well as other elected union positions from Edmonton. Please stay tuned for more details and make every effort to participate and get involved.

For more information or to raise any questions, comments or concerns you may have, please feel free to contact your elected representatives or AUPE resource staff listed below.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS:

Jan Davidson-Carey 403-404-2307 or jan.davidson@hotmail.com

Michele Lucas 780-288-2535 or michele.lucas394@hotmail.com

Peter Dubourt Chapter Chair, 780-293-5141 or pdubourt@yahoo.ca

AUPE RESOURCE STAFF:

Merryn Edwards Negotiator, m.edwards@aupe.org

Dave Malka Organizer, d.malka@aupe.org

Celia Shea Communications, c.shea@aupe.org