

October 19, 2020

Via email

Mr. Dale Perry
Union Representative, Negotiator
Alberta Union of Provincial Employees
10451-170 Street
Edmonton, AB T5P 4S7

Dear Mr. Perry:

Further to the Government of Alberta's pre-bargaining disclosure letter of November 28, 2019 and as committed to in our disclosure request response letter dated February 5, 2020, this letter is to advise that the Government of Alberta will be proceeding with a number of initiatives and making a number of announcements that will impact the bargaining unit and will result in adjustments and a refocus of the existing workforce.

This letter is for the purposes of providing additional disclosure in accordance with our legal obligations.

As always, we ask that discretion be exercised in the use and distribution of this information since plans and initiatives continue to be finalized.

The following initiatives could impact up to 930 positions through to the end of the current 2020-21 fiscal year. Changes to positions could include abolishments, ending termed employment, and redeployment to other roles.

Attrition will be leveraged where possible to reduce the impact on employees. Attrition and ongoing planning may result in amendments to the identified reductions both in numbers and types of roles.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Agriculture and Forestry (AF) is proceeding with a number of initiatives that will result in an anticipated total of 247 bargaining unit positions being abolished as part of a phased workforce transformation. AF will continue to ensure that impacts are minimized through attrition wherever possible. AF will be implementing the abolishments in two phases in 2020-21, with phase one occurring in October 2020 and phase two in quarter 4 of the fiscal year.

AF classifications impacted by abolishment include Administrative Support 3-6, Automotive Service Technician, Equipment Operator 1, Info and Creative Tech Services 3, Natural Resources 3-9, Operational Services 2-4, Program Services 1-5, Scientific 1-5, and Technologies 1-7.

Within Forestry, 57 positions will be abolished across the functional areas of Wildfire Management, Forest Management and Forest Health.

In the Primary Agriculture division, approximately 135 positions will be abolished as a result of the following initiatives:

- The Plant and Bee Health Surveillance, Agriculture Service Boards, Crop Assurance Extension including Farm Safety programs will each be reducing staff, refocusing the work of the programs.

- The department will be transitioning research to a farmer-led delivery model, including the creation of the Results Driven Agriculture Research organization. Under this new model, agricultural research in Alberta will lead to tangible benefits for farmers, including higher profits, a more abundant food supply at lower cost for consumers and ultimately a higher quality of life in rural communities. As part of this initiative, there will be abolishments in both October 2020 and quarter 4 of the fiscal year in research and extension within: dairy research and extension consortium of Alberta, cropping systems, greenhouse service agreements, CAP science and research, innovation agriculture grants, apiculture research, the strategic research and development program, and applied research in value-added meats.
- Realignment of priorities in the Environmental and Farm Stewardship and Irrigation and Farm Water Branches.

In the Process Trade & International Relations division, 21 positions will be abolished as a result of the following initiatives:

- The Business Development Services program will be re-focused on activities that address sector growth and market access issues. The Food Science and Technology Centre in Brooks, the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc and agri-food laboratories for food micro-biology, parasitology and support services will be reduced or eliminated although the large majority of positions in the laboratories will remain.

In the Strategy, Planning & Governance division, 13 positions will be abolished as a result of the following initiatives:

- Three positions as a result of administrative and procedural efficiencies.
- Following the comprehensive engagement that was held with 4-H stakeholders in August 2019, the 4-H Alberta governance and operating model will be implemented based on input from those currently involved in delivering 4-H. The new 4-H Alberta governance and operating model will consolidate seven regions and 56 districts into five managed areas. With the transition to the new governance model work will shift from staff support for 4-H to funding support for 4-H. 10 positions will be abolished.

Administrative and procedural efficiencies will occur resulting in the abolishment of 21 positions throughout the department. Decisions have not been finalized on the specific programs.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Child Intervention Delivery is currently undertaking an initiative to enhance workload balancing and facilitate improved client services performed by bargaining unit employees in Subsidiary 006. The proposed approach is not anticipated to reduce the workforce and focuses primarily on the career progression, development and deployment of staff in response to client needs. This initiative is awaiting final approval to proceed with initial implementation and next steps.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The department is identifying general administrative efficiencies that may impact up to six positions, however, timing and final decisions on this initiative are still under consideration.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Community and Social Services (CSS) will continue to protect Albertans in need while ensuring that vulnerable Albertans continue to receive the support they require. CSS may be impacting up to 536 positions through various means by the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year, subject to the active consultation with AUPE regarding potential contracting out of Direct Operations. This includes redeployments, ending temporary salaried, wage 2850 and wage positions early, reclassifications as well as permanent abolishments. Details on specific initiatives follow:

Closing of Alberta Job Corp: Alberta Job Corps (AJC) across the province will be closing. AJC has been suspended since March 2020, due to COVID 19, and all trainees were terminated in March 2020 due to suspension of the program.

A total of 32 positions will be affected (18 redeployments to other areas within the Delivery Service Division, one temporary position will end early to redeploy a permanent individual, and 13 positions will be abolished). Classifications impacted include Program Services 3-4, and Administrative Support 3-5.

McCullough Centre: The McCullough Centre will be closing. Due to current staffing pressures, budget management strategies, and the anticipated future closure of the site, a pause on intake has been in place since August 26, 2019.

A total of 63 positions will be affected (32 positions will be abolished and three temporary, one wage 2850, and 27 wage positions will end early). Classifications impacted include Medical Support 1, Licenced Practical Nurse, Administrative Support 4-5, Program Services 3-4, Individual Support 1-2, Rehab 2-5, Cook 1, and Equipment Operator 1.

Michener Services: Ongoing adjustments continue to be made to staffing resources, housing and on-site services in response to the decreasing population. As this occurs, the outcomes will be supported:

- Individuals residing at Michener will have access to all of the community services and supports they require.
- Guardians, families, individuals and community service providers will have confidence in the GoA's commitment to support the service needs of persons with developmental disabilities in Alberta.
- The GoA will ensure that supports and services to persons with developmental disabilities are cost effective and equitable.
- Michener residents will be able to access health/wellness services in the same manner as all other Albertans.

Ancillary services that are confirmed to end include The Hub, Camp L.G. Barnes and Dental Services. A total of seven positions will be affected (five staff will be redeployed and two position will be abolished). Classifications impacted include HSW3, Equipment Operations 2, Technologies 3, Facility Support 2, and Individual Support 2, Medical Support 1.

Alberta Supports Channel Reduction Strategy: The service delivery model for Alberta Supports is currently under review, building on lessons learned from business changes that were implemented in response to the pandemic. Changes instituted during the pandemic have identified promising approaches to streamline services, share staffing resources throughout the province and ensure equal access to consistent levels of services. These changes have resulted in 90 in-person Alberta Support Coordinators (Program Services 1) working with Albertans remotely. Decisions regarding the new service delivery model have not been determined, but no reductions are anticipated at this point and classification will remain the same at the Program Services 1 level.

Direct Operations: As AUPE is aware, pursuant to Article 53, CSS is currently consulting with the AUPE on alternate service delivery options for the Edmonton and Calgary Region Direct Operations programs, including the potential of contracting out these services to a service provider.

No decisions have been made on the outcome on this initiative to date. However, if the contracting out option is selected, 344 employees would be impacted, including 191 abolishments, and 153 temps, wage 2850 and wage being ended early. Classifications that would be impacted, if contracting out proceeds, include: Individual Support 1-2, Rehab 1-3, Facility Support 1-3, Medical and Health 1-2, Administrative Support 4, Administration 1, Equipment Operations 2, and Cook 1.

CULTURE, MULTICULTURALISM, AND STATUS OF WOMEN

The department will consolidate graphic design and exhibit design functions within the Heritage Division into the functions being performed at the Royal Alberta Museum, resulting in three positions (two full-time, one part-time) being abolished. The classifications impacted are Information & Creative Technical Services 3 and 4.

EDUCATION

The department is identifying general efficiencies that may impact up to three positions, however, timing and final decisions on this initiative are still under consideration.

INFRASTRUCTURE

As AUPE is aware, a consultation process under Article 53 has occurred on the facilities operations at the Royal Alberta Museum. No decisions have been made on the outcome of this initiative to date. However, if the contracting out option is selected, a total of 31 bargaining unit positions would be impacted. The classifications include Caretaking Services 1-3, Electrician 1, Maintenance Service Worker 2-3, Plumber, Power Plant Engineer and Technologies 5-6.

JUSTICE AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

Justice and Solicitor General (JSG) will be proceeding with a number of initiatives that may impact up to 24 positions across the department as follows.

Alberta Crown Prosecution Services (ACPS): First Appearance Centres around the province will be eliminated, resulting in three First Appearance Prosecutors at the Program Services 2 classification being abolished.

Justice Services: Although final approval is still pending, we anticipate receiving direction to abolish through program organizational changes: one Finance 3, six Program Services 1, one Program Services 3, and one Program Services 4. Affected staff and programs will be informed after decisions are made.

Legal Services: Two positions will be abolished in Legal Services, including a Legal Coordinator, Administration 1 and a Legal Assistant, Administrative Support 3.

Correctional Services: Although pending approval, we expect that Correctional Services will be abolishing six positions in Community Corrections Release and Programs Branch. In addition, four positions in the Administrative Support and Program Services classifications will be abolished.

Sheriffs Branch:

Rural Alberta Provincial Integrated Defence (RAPID) Force Initiative: The Government of Alberta intends to improve rural policing with the RAPID Force, projected to commence December 2020 through a phased approach. This will impact Sheriffs Branch and Fish and Wildlife Officers by incorporating policing duties to their roles.

The first phase will begin with Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Branch (FWEB) Officers responding to priority 911 calls in rural Alberta. Approximately 119 officers and 34 FWEB support staff are expected to perform these policing duties. The second phase is anticipated to be implemented in Spring 2021 and will comprise 236 Sheriffs Branch officers (Traffic and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE)) responding to traffic incidents on Alberta's highways, to assist the RCMP so they can focus further on rural crime. The Sheriffs Branch officers consist of 109 Traffic Sheriffs and 127 CVE Officers. After the second phase is implemented, all existing FWEB and Sheriffs Branch officers will conduct RAPID Force duties. The training program is currently under development and will be based on best practices, duty requirements, health and safety. The timing of training is yet to be determined.

In response to AUPE's question in your January 3, 2020 disclosure request letter asking if this program exists in other jurisdictions, a similar program was instituted in Saskatchewan in 2017/18.

Participation in RAPID by FWEB/Sheriffs Branch (Traffic and CVE) will be mandatory and officers from all areas of the Province will be expected to be able to perform RAPID duties. There will be no change to the current reporting structures for FWEB and Sheriffs Branch at this time and supervision will continue to be performed by the respective areas and not by external agencies (i.e. RCMP).

CVE has 32 vacancies; the Sheriffs Branch has 94 vacancies in the classifications of PS4, SST1-4, SS&C5, AS5, and AS4; and FWEB has 7 vacancies in the classifications of AS4, NR6-7.

As announced to employees on October 2, 2020, a classification review was completed and as a result, it was determined that the additional RAPID Force duties do not substantively change the knowledge, problem-solving or responsibility (as described under the Government's Point Rating Evaluation Plan) required to perform the main job functions. Therefore, there would be no change to the classifications of the job descriptions that were submitted for RAPID.

TRANSPORTATION

As AUPE is aware, a consultation process under Article 53 commenced to review the road test model in November 2019. A total of 80 positions will be abolished all at the Administration 1 classification.

If you have any questions please contact me at 780-644-3900 or Steve.Stringfellow@gov.ab.ca.

Sincerely,



Steve Stringfellow
Executive Negotiations Strategist
Provincial Bargaining Coordination Office

cc: Jim Petrie, Director of Labour Relations, AUPE
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