

ALBERTA UNION OF PROVINCIAL EMPLOYEES

# BARGAINING UPDATE

JANUARY 31, 2020

## LEGAL AID SOCIETY

LOCAL: 118  
CHAPTER: 018, 019  
ALL STAFF

## TENTATIVE AGREEMENT REACHED

After a challenging round of negotiations, your Legal Aid bargaining team and the employer came to a tentative agreement last week, Jan. 24.

**On Monday, Feb. 10 we'll have our ratification vote:**

**4:30 pm**

**6th floor board room at Legal Aid Edmonton**

*\*Calgary members will vote at their AGM and their votes will be counted at the time of the Edmonton vote.*

Please ensure you come out, cast your vote and have your voice heard. Throughout bargaining we were thrown multiple curve-balls. LAA disrupted your working conditions and made unilateral changes without regard to the effect on clients. In this tentative agreement we secured protections as recourse for their disturbing actions.

However, with those protections as our focus, we agreed to a status quo agreement, with no monetary improvements to wages or benefits. Consequently, we changed the expiry date to December 31, 2020; as such, if this agreement is ratified, we will be preparing imminently to re-enter negotiations.

One of these protections is the option for members impacted by the employer's classification changes (limited to those at step 6 or above) to leave Legal Aid with severance pay of up to one year's salary.

Another provision in the agreement is a process for an arbitrator to make a final decision on the rates of pay for the new classifications. Employees hired after ratification would be paid on the employer's proposed (reduced) pay scale, but would receive retroactive pay if the arbitrator decided on a higher rate of pay.

The current salaries for existing employees shall be protected for as long as they remain employed, even if the arbitrator ruled that the rates of pay should be reduced going forward. In that case,

current employees would continue to be paid at their current rate until the salary grid catches up to them, but would continue to receive any future negotiated pay increases as a lump sum.

Other provisions we negotiated address issues members identified as priorities before bargaining started, including:

- An improved vacation scheduling process.
- No sick note requirements for casual illness
- Minimum 24-hour notice from the employer for disciplinary or investigative meetings
- No discrimination protections for union-membership
- 90-day timelines within which the employer must respond to a harassment claim
- Leaves of absence have also been updated to reflect legislative changes to employment standards.

Your bargaining committee is available to answer any questions or provide additional information prior to our ratification vote on Monday Feb. 10.

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