

BARGAINING UPDATE



GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

LOCAL 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 009 & 012 – ALL STAFF

GSBC update #16: We end formal mediation and move to a strike vote

Your negotiating team says enough is enough. We have ended formal mediation and will now hold a strike vote.

At 11 a.m. today (Wednesday, April 16), the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) Government Services Bargaining Committee (GSBC) notified the Government of Alberta's lead negotiator that the union is officially booking out the mediator from the formal mediation process.

This action will trigger a 14-calendar-day cooling-off period, after which the union will be in a legal position to take a strike vote, supervised by the Alberta Labour Relations Board.

We urged the employer to return to the table with a respectful, comprehensive package, similar to those offered to other unions, that includes funding to finance a fair collective agreement.

We will not allow our employer to divide us. We have solidarity. We have power. Below is an account of the last several days of mediation to explain where bargaining is at and your union's course of action to date.

Formal mediation March 20 – 21

The employer tabled a new offer of 10% over four years (3%, 2.75%, 2.25%, and 2%).

From the outset of negotiations, your bargaining committee has made it unequivocally clear: All members must be treated equitably. Equal work deserves equal compensation.

We have further maintained that any classification found to be below market value should only be reassessed after the application of a newly negotiated wage grid, not before.

In an effort to advance negotiations, your Government Services Bargaining Committee (GSBC) revised its original wage proposal. Instead of seeking 26% over three years, we asked for 24% (13%, 6%, and 5%).

It was clear that we had reached an impasse.

Your negotiating team seriously considered suspending talks to prepare for a strike vote. The employer showed no desire to address the urgent needs of our members.

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Last-ditch effort

To avoid a complete breakdown of talks, both sides agreed to have a mediated meeting on April 1.

We stood firm that our members deserved no less an increase than members of the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA), who secured wage raises averaging 19.8% over four years. We have been hit with the same increases in rents, mortgages, groceries and fuel.

A mediator has recommended 15.1% over four years for teachers. Members of the Alberta Teachers' Association will vote on that recommendation on May 6.

We reinforced our key demands: Job security; inflation protection through Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA); enhanced mental-health supports; and a serious response to staffing shortages and unsustainable workloads.

More formal mediation April 8-9

The employer increased its offer to 11.5% over four years (3%, 3%, 2.75%, 2.75%), alongside selective market adjustments applied only to certain classifications. It offered market adjustments to boost wages for only 23 classifications, affecting only 36% of our membership.

We asked several times how they determined that only those members deserve a market adjustment, but they have refused to show us full disclosure of their analysis, indicating they know their research is deeply flawed.

We have made it clear that the grouping and benchmarking tactics employed by the employer are overly broad, non-specific and serve to depress wage comparisons.

Your negotiating team adjusted its demand, seeking 24% over four years instead of three (10%, 6%, 4%, and 4%).

This is what we feel is necessary to regain the purchasing power we have lost to inflation over the last six years. This is the mandate you gave us when we began bargaining.

The employer's current strategy of offering selective increases to specialty groups, based on questionable market analysis, serves only to divide our membership and drive down overall wages.

The employer continues to offer wage increases significantly below other bargaining units in the public sector.

Table 1 below compares the deals offered to us and to the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) and the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA).

By the end of the term of the UNA and ATA deals, the Government of Alberta will be paying an additional \$500 million more in payroll costs as a result of wage increases offered to these bargaining units. By contrast, the employer would pay only \$200 million more in additional payroll costs for our bargaining unit.

The average member of UNA and ATA will see their wages increase by 19.8% and 15.1% respectively. By contrast, our employer's latest offer would result in the average member seeing wages increase by 13.8% and this amount would not be distributed equally because of the government's proposal to review only some classifications for market adjustments.

Table 1: Payroll Changes 2023-2027 (UNA, ATA and GSBC employer and union positions)

DESCRIPTION	PAYROLL CHANGE	PAYROLL CHANGE (%)
UNA Ratified Agreement	\$500,228,772	19.8%
ATA Mediator's Recommendation	\$436,742,916	15.1%
GSBC: Employer's Latest Offer - 3.0%, 3.0%, 2.75%, 2.75% + Market Adjustments	\$209,233,206	13.8%
GSBC: Union's Latest Offer - 10.0%, 6.0%, 4.0%, 4.0%	\$395,873,701	26.1%

Source: AUPE Research

Note(s): Based on estimated distributions of UNA and ATA.

The employer's use of market adjustments is a cynical attempt to divide and conquer our bargaining unit. As shown in Table 2 below, only 23 classifications out of the 148 in our bargaining unit would receive an adjustment. These 23 classifications represent just over 36% of our bargaining unit, meaning that 2/3 of the bargaining unit will receive the minimum increases of 3% per year over the next four years.

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Table 2: Analysis of Employer's Market Adjustments

	TOTAL #	% OF BARGAINING UNIT
Classifications receiving a Market Adjustment	23	15.5%
Members receiving a Market Adjustment	7,949	36%
Members not receiving a Market Adjustment	14,076	64%

Source: AUPE Research

Important telephone town halls

We will be holding telephone town halls at noon and 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, and Thursday, May 1.

These will include an update on bargaining and a discussion about a strike vote. It is critical that we get a strong vote in favour of striking to give us the mandate and leverage to reach a settlement.

It is imperative that you attend at least one of these town halls.

Stay tuned for details on how to participate and the date the strike vote will be taken.

Do you have a MyAUPE account?

Members must have a MyAUPE account to participate in a future strike vote and collect strike pay. If you don't have one, you can set one up at create a MyAUPE account. If you already have an account, please ensure your information is up to date.



We need leaders – register for Strike Captain Training

AUPE members must be prepared for the possibility of a strike or lockout.

Register today for an upcoming Strike Captain Course. This in-person course is just one day. You will receive time off work to take it.

Learn more about being a Strike Captain and register for a course near you.

Please contact a member of your negotiating team if you have any questions.

