

BARGAINING UPDATE



ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES, RECOVERY ALBERTA, PRIMARY CARE ALBERTA, ACUTE CARE ALBERTA – NURSING CARE

LOCALS 041, 043, 044, 045, AND 046

AHS Nursing Care: June town halls recap and FAQs

Your negotiating team hosted a series of telephone town halls on June 23 and 24.

Thousands of you joined us to ask hundreds of questions over those two days. We had excellent conversations about bargaining with AHS, our Essential Services Agreement (ESA), and the workplace issues that matter most to you.

Here are answers to some of the most common questions members had during our town halls.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. When are we getting back to bargaining?

AHS is considering our new offer, and we expect to hear back from them very soon. We hope they agree to get back to the bargaining table without waiting for mediation, but they may not.

2. How much of a pay increase are we asking for?

Our wage proposals are the same as what we shared in April.

Licensed Practical Nurses (and those in that stream of work) would make 84% of Registered Nurse wages to reflect our increased scope of practice.

Health Care Aides (and those in that stream of work) would receive the same scale of wage increase proportionate to LPNs, maintaining the gap between classifications after the significant increase.

3. Are our wage proposals based on the United Nurses of Alberta's old wage scale or their new agreement?

Our proposal is based off UNA's new wage scales.

4. Are LPNs and HCAs asking for the same things?

Our bargaining unit consists of many job classifications, most of which can be classified as either LPNs or HCAs. Aside from the exact pay scale sections of the collective agreement, almost all of our proposals are the same for everyone in the AUPE Nursing Care team.

5. Why the wait for our Essential Services Agreement (ESA)?

AHS has dragged their feet, slowing down the process of finishing our ESA. However, it is not a quick process to begin with. AUPE takes its responsibilities and obligations under the ESA seriously, and we want to ensure we get it right.

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6. Will we get retro pay?

Our proposal includes full retroactive pay, starting April 1, 2024. It also accounts for the next increase, which should have happened starting April 1, 2025.

7. How do we continue to get more community engagement?

Keep talking to your family, friends, and coworkers about the challenges you face at work, the conditions your patients endure, and how we can make it better through collective bargaining.

Share the information you learned during the town hall, including this update, and keep asking questions. We need your solidarity and support to get AHS back to the bargaining table.

AUPE is also launching a public awareness campaign later this summer. The advertising campaign will be all about the important work we do as Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides.

8. Are we going on strike?

Not necessarily. Strikes can be a powerful and effective tool, but we are not there yet. Your negotiating team believes we can achieve a good collective agreement at the bargaining table.

Even taking a strike vote does not mean we must strike. But if members show up loud and proud and deliver a strong strike vote, that gives us leverage at the bargaining table. It tells AHS we have a mandate to do whatever it takes to win better wages, benefits, and working conditions. Sometimes, that's enough power to convince the employer to give us what we deserve without a strike.

9. During a strike, will I be a Designated Essential Service Worker (DESW) or will I be on the picket line?

The ESA will say which job duties are essential and how many AUPE members of each classification are needed to keep the worksite running. It does not assign specific workers to be DESWs or strikers. You may be scheduled as a DESW some days, and other days you will be out on the strike line.

AHS will schedule DESWs in the first week of a strike, then AUPE will take over if the strike continues. Schedules will be provided to employees by the employer.

10. If I get paid as an essential worker and walk the picket line for 30 hours, do I get paid overtime?

Strike pay guarantees AUPE members get paid at least \$700 per week if they meet the required 30 hours of picketing during the strike. If you work enough shifts as a DESW to make \$700 or more, you are no longer eligible for strike pay. You can, however, still walk the picket line in solidarity! We're all in this together.

11. How do we increase our online membership? Only 60% of AHS Nursing Care workers have signed up for a MyAUPE account.

MyAUPE accounts are so important, and you do not automatically have one! You must [sign up for a MyAUPE account](#) if you have not already.

You need an account to vote for a new collective agreement, vote to strike, and collect strike pay quickly.

Ensure your coworkers know how important it is to create an account. You can also contact AUPE's Organizing department to schedule an educational Lunch 'n' Learn or signup event at your worksite.

12. Why do we not want to go to mediation? That's how UNA got their agreement.

Mediation can be a good tool. But like with any tool, there are limitations and drawbacks. It can take a long time. And as members know, we cannot begin mediation without waiting for our final ESA.

Mediators also don't decide anything, they just make recommendations. What if they make recommendations that aren't good enough or that members disagree with? We would be in the same situation as now.

The important point is that your team believes we can reach a good deal at bargaining table without a mediator.

13. Are we looking at getting X days for LPNs, like RNs have?

Short answer: no. Long answer: X days are tricky. Even if we get them, AHS does not have to offer shifts on an X day, especially if it saves them money. Our proposal focuses on higher wages, better scheduling, and better workloads to address the root of the problem. That is a better strategy than leaving money on the table by compromising for X days that may never be used.

Your negotiating team wishes to thank you all, once again, for your solidarity and for participating in our town halls.

Please contact your negotiating team representative if you have any questions.