

BARGAINING UPDATE



GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

LOCALS 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 009 & 012 - ALL STAFF

GSBC UPDATE #3:

Government opens with insulting offer

We need members to step up now to support bargaining

The Government of Alberta (GOA) opened bargaining with an offer that can only be described as an insult to its workers.

The government's opening offer was a four-year deal with raises of 2%, 2%, 1.75% and 1.75% - nowhere near allowing us to catch up with the soaring inflation we have been enduring.

Your negotiating team will submit our monetary proposals on March 6. We're seeking a three-year deal with wage raises of 13%, 6.5% and 6.5%. We are also proposing Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to protect us from further inflation problems.

The chart below shows what GOA members would have received in the last four years if our COLA proposal had been in place. The plan would be for members to receive lump-sum payments at the end of each year, the size of which depend on CPI.

The Bank of Canada is predicting an inflation rate of close to 3% for the first half of 2024 and says the path back to 2% will be gradual. Inflation in Canada started to spike three years ago, reaching as high as 8.1% in June 2022.

According to Statistics Canada, the Alberta inflation rate in January was 3.4%, higher than the national rate of 2.9%.

We all know how hard it has been to keep up, to put food on our tables while grocery prices soared, to pay rent or mortgages as the cost of shelter hit staggering heights.

We're scrambling to pay our bills and our employer wants us to fall further behind with raises less than the current inflation rate, while doing nothing to address the last few years.

The employer also wants to maintain two-tier wage grids for PS3, PS4 and NR9 workers. AUPE is demanding that this be abolished as an unfair practice.

Year	Annual Salary				CPI %
	\$40,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$70,000.00	
2020	\$447.24	\$559.05	\$670.86	\$782.67	1.1%
2021	\$1,271.60	\$1,589.50	\$1,907.39	\$2,225.29	3.2%
2022	\$2,572.00	\$3,215.00	\$3,858.00	\$4,501.00	6.4%
2023	\$1,309.00	\$1,636.25	\$1,963.50	\$2,290.75	3.3%
Total	\$5,599.84	\$6,999.80	\$8,399.76	\$9,799.72	

Source: Statistics Canada - Table:18-10-0005-01

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AUPE NEGOTIATING TEAM - GOA GOVERNMENT SERVICES BARGAINING COMMITTEE (GSBC)

Guy Smith GSBC Chair

Local 001

Kathleen Buss GSBC Representative
quilterbuss@gmail.com

Local 002

Lorraine Ellis GSBC Representative
lorraine.ellis@shaw.ca

Local 003

Dax Lydiard GSBC Representative
003bargaining@gmail.com

Local 004

Steven Eagles GSBC Representative
s-eagles@shaw.ca

Local 005

Jeffrey Bleach GSBC Representative
Bargaininglocal005@aupe.org

Local 006

Rob Poggemiller GSBC Representative
poggrope@hotmail.com

Local 009

Russell Clark GSBC Representative
russell.clark@shaw.ca

Local 012

Richard Hansen GSBC Representative
chairlocal012@aupe.ca

AUPE RESOURCE STAFF

James Mitchell Negotiations
j.mitchell@aupe.org

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AUPE will be proposing that no GOA worker be paid less than a living wage of \$22.98 per hour. There is no reason that any government worker should be unable to afford food, clothes and rent while working full time for the government of a very wealthy province.

The government is predicting a budget surplus of \$5.5 billion in 2023-24. That's \$3.2 billion more than it anticipated in last year's budget. It also boasts about the hundreds of billions of dollars being invested in the province. It can afford to pay a living wage.

On top of the insulting offer on wages, the GOA wants to get rid of job-security language in the last collective agreement, meaning it wants to cut jobs. We are proposing that the Letter of Understanding that expired on Dec. 31, 2022, (LOU 15) be revived in the next agreement.

There was nothing in the GOA offer to tackle staff shortages or excessive workloads, both of which are leading to mass burnouts for workers. The employer also wants to water down our health-spending accounts.

The GSBC committee is working with AUPE's Research Department to identify classifications that require market adjustments to bring them in line with wages paid for similar work outside the GOA.

Your negotiating team can only push back successfully if you, the members, show your support for us as we bargain. There's no time to wait. We need all GOA members to step up and get involved.

We need your support

Your negotiating team cannot get an agreement to satisfy you without your active participation. We need to show the employer that we're angry, we're united, we're determined and we will fight.

We need you to attend

Although it remains our goal to achieve a negotiated settlement at the bargaining table, we anticipate we will reach a critical stage where we need your involvement and participation. At that point we will be organizing town-hall meetings to review what's happening and what you need to do to support your negotiations.

We need you to participate

We also believe it is important that information pickets and worksite rallies be organized to show our solidarity, our dissatisfaction and our determination. Any actions will be organized through our GOA Locals and activists with the support of AUPE headquarters. Watch for more information on these actions.

We need you to be aware of your full bargaining rights

Negotiations with the GOA are also continuing to secure an Essential Services Agreement (ESA), which is required for you to exercise your full collective bargaining rights, including the right to take a strike vote, and to take strike action if required. We hope to provide further information and progress on the ESA in future bargaining updates.

Just like AUPE members, workers across Canada and globally are realizing they need to push back hard to make the gains they need and deserve. For example, City of Edmonton workers recently took a strike vote with 91% in favour. That's the kind of result that has real positive impact in negotiations.

Stay Tuned

We need you to stay in touch. We will be sending regular bargaining updates. Please make sure your personal information is updated on the AUPE website here: <https://www.aupe.org/update-info>

AUPE members have been under extreme financial pressures due to high inflation, out-of-control interest rates and heavy workloads, coupled with short staffing. We know there's a lot at stake and we're going to fight to make some serious gains. We need you to get involved now!

If you have questions, please reach out to a member of your negotiating team.

Read GSBC bargaining update #1 here.

Read GSBC bargaining update #2 here.