



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

BARGAINING BULLETIN

PLEASE POST

Committees set to present monetary proposals and living wage research to Sodexo, Aramark and Compass

Compass presents final offer and applies for mediation at labour relations board. Sodexo and Aramark continue negotiations with HEU.

On January 27 and 28, HEU's Big 3 bargaining committees will be presenting their monetary proposals to Compass, Sodexo and Aramark. This will include a presentation about the living wage calculation that was developed by community researchers and academics in the fall of 2008.

In the case of Compass negotiations, the presentation will be made at the Labour Relations Board (LRB). That's because Compass recently took the extraordinary step of presenting their final position and applying for mediation at the LRB. More information on the situation is available in the Compass information section of this bulletin.

Sodexo and Aramark, in contrast, continue to negotiate with the union at their respective bargaining tables.

In addition to wages, benefits and other monetary issues, the committees will be tabling any other items that have not been raised at previous meetings with the three employers. The committees are presenting very similar proposals to all three employers, in order to bring the agreements in line with one another.

Members employed by Sodexo, Aramark and Compass are negotiating their second contracts with the "Big 3." Their first contracts expired September 30, 2008. The terms and conditions of those contracts remain in effect until new collective agreements are negotiated or achieved through mediation.

A living wage, for cleaner safer hospitals -- watch for the ads!

To support members' fight for a living wage and safe working conditions, the union is running ads to show the difficulties that members face on the job, every day.

Short staffing, not enough supplies, and constant turnover all make it difficult to provide the housekeeping and dietary services that keep our hospitals clean and safe.

Starting on January 26, TV and newspaper ads will run for several weeks in communities around the Lower Mainland and on Southern Vancouver Island.

The ads can also be seen at www.bclivingwage.org.

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Compass

After a limited number of days of bargaining, and before they had heard all the union's proposals, Compass presented their final position and wage offer to the bargaining committees.

Compass has also applied for mediation and has asked for essential service level discussions at the Labour Relations Board. The LRB has assigned mediator Grant McArthur to work with the two parties.

It is important for members to know that this move by Compass does not follow common bargaining practices.

Usually, an application for essential service levels designation would only be requested when a significant amount of bargaining had taken place and both parties had reached an impasse. It is the union's position that this was not the case in negotiations with Compass.

What does an essential service levels designation mean?

Essential service level designations determine staffing levels in the event of a strike or lockout. The Labour Relations Board will set staffing levels based on input from the union and the employer.

Despite Compass' application for essential service level designation, the union has made no plans to move in the direction of job action. The bargaining committee will continue to focus on achieving an agreement through negotiations and – in the case of Compass – through mediation.

The HEU bargaining representative is David Durning.

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The final position from Compass

- A 3% wage increase each year, for three years, starting October 2008. A 3% increase is equal to 39 cents per hour.
- Compass put forward new language that has not been agreed to by the union and that does not address the substantial issues raised by the bargaining committees.

Some of the proposals that Compass rejected or ignored:

- An Occupational Health and Safety coordination process to improve worker safety;
- Additional training requirements to help prevent workplace injuries;
- Permanent 'floater' positions to reduce the amount that workers are pulled off their assigned areas to compensate for short staffing in other areas;
- The regularization of workers on the casual list to encourage recruitment and retention.

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Member involvement is needed today!

The process of setting essential service levels at Compass sites and activating local members requires assistance and involvement from all members in the bargaining unit.

Now is the most important time to work together - through solidarity, mobilizing and pressure on the employer. The bargaining committee and their negotiations are only as strong as the membership and allies behind them.

Aramark

The Aramark bargaining committee and the employer are continuing negotiations. The committee will table monetary proposals and other outstanding issues on January 28.

At previous meetings in November, the two parties reached agreement on some of the committee's proposals. These include:

- Stronger collective agreement language to ensure members have adequate protective equipment such as gloves, masks, and safety glasses; and
- Improved protections and fairness for the process of assigning vacant positions to members on the casual list.

The bargaining committees and bargaining staff will be reporting out to members once the employer has responded to the monetary proposals presented on January 28.

The HEU bargaining representative is Noel Gulbransen.

Sodexo

The Sodexo bargaining committee and the employer are continuing negotiations. The committee will table monetary proposals and other outstanding issues on January 27.

At previous meetings in December, the two parties did reach agreement on some of the committee's proposals. These include:

- Improved protections and fairness for the process of assigning vacant positions to members on the casual list; and
- Improvements in seniority rights for casuals who have been injured on the job.

The HEU bargaining representative is Susan Fisher.

Member information and training meetings

The union is organizing meetings to report on the latest bargaining developments, including the employers' responses to the union's monetary proposals. Notices will be posted at worksites as soon as times and locations are confirmed.

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