



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

Labour Board appoints mediator in stalled contract talks

Normanna, Evergreen workers looking for decent wages, improved working conditions and respect

It's been more than eight months since first contract negotiations got underway for about 60 HEU members employed by Compass at Normanna and Evergreen care homes in the Lower Mainland.

But following unanimous strike votes in both facilities early in the new year, the union's request for mediation under Section 55 of BC's Labour Code has been granted.

Mediation dates are set for February 20, 2006 (Normanna) and February 21, 2006 (Evergreen). Grant McArthur has been appointed as mediator.

Under Section 55 mediation takes place within a narrow time frame where the mediator either recommends the contract's terms or a process for concluding the agreement, unless the parties manage to reach agreement on their own.

Contract talks were initiated in early June. But by June 29, when both parties had finished tabling their bargaining proposals, Compass applied for mediation under Section 74 of BC's Labour Code.

Talks continued to stall after a September 7 mediation meeting where Compass refused to move from its opening position.

"It's been clear from all our meetings that Compass is not interested in negotiating a fair collective agreement with our members," says the union's bargaining spokesperson Noel Gulbransen.

"We're hopeful that Section 55 mediation will expedite the process and get us to a fair, first collective agreement – one that recognizes the important services our members provide and ensures greater respect in the workplace."

"It's been a long, tough struggle for everyone involved, but the end is finally in sight," he says. "I'm encouraging everyone to stay in touch with the bargaining committee as we continue our efforts to achieve the best first contract possible."

HEU Bargaining Committee members:

Normanna

Cathy Byington

David Chan

Roselin Chandra (alternate)

Evergreen

Shirley Irvine

Sylvia Fryer

Beverly Barrett (alternate)

February 8, 2006

