



## Five-year tentative agreement reached in community social services

The multi-union Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) has reached a tentative agreement with the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) for the 11,000 union members working in community-based social services across the province.

The five-year agreement significantly closes the wage gap between workers in this sector and those with equivalent positions in the community health sector.

The early coordinated talks at the three tables led by BCGEU also included Community Health (with the Health Employers Association of BC) and the public service agreement (with the provincial government).

Both the multi-union CSSBA and the Community Bargaining Association (for community health) include HEU members, and they approved the early talks with the goal of finding common ground to reach settlements.

Highlights of the tentative agreement for community social services include:

- wage comparability adjustments over five years for members with occupations similar to those covered by the Community Health agreement (affecting about three-quarters of all workers in the sector);
- four general wage increases of one per cent each over the term of the agreement;
- wage adjustments to address specific job classifications within the joint job evaluation plan;
- an Economic Stability Dividend in four of the five years that may provide further wage improvements;
- modest improvements to health benefits, including vision care. Also agreed to by the parties is the establishment of a Joint Benefits Working Group that will monitor and make recommendations to control the costs of benefits in the community social services sector; and
- modest increases to mileage and meal allowance reimbursements.

Current provisions for employment security are maintained for the five years of the agreement.

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*Page Two*

The new community social services agreement expires March 31, 2019.

HEU, BCGEU, CUPE, HSA and six other unions together make up the multi-union Community Social Services Bargaining Association.

HEU represents about 1,500 community social services workers in the sector. BCGEU is the lead union in the sector, with 11,000 members in the sector. Members include community living workers supporting youths and adults with developmental disabilities, youth-at-risk, infant and child development, women services, substance addictions, First Nations, and employment services, among others.

HEU members will receive information about a comprehensive report and details of ratification votes in the coming days.

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