

MORE RESULTS FROM THE UNIT 1 BARGAINING SURVEY

Our first Bargaining Survey closed on Friday October 23rd. We received over 600 responses – that’s just over one quarter of our bargaining unit. We have started compiling the information that we received from our members, and the Workplace Committee (referred to as the Bargaining Committee during negotiations) and I will be using this information as we start prepping for next year’s negotiations. Unsurprisingly, by far the big issues we are seeing are wages, pension and benefits and job security. Sick time and job descriptions were also prominent concerns. Summaries of results are featured in this newsletter.

We are happy to see that close to 90% of respondents are using all of their vacation and personal day entitlements. We received a number of comments and suggestions for how members feel these two entitlements can be improved. We will take this opportunity to remind our membership that personal days are a ‘use it or lose it’ benefit. They cannot be carried over nor paid out.

In regards to prescription, specialists, vision and dental benefits we have a lot of information to compile so we can put it all into context. What is clear, however, is that benefits are very important to our membership.

In regards to semi-private hospital coverage, the majority of our members are not interested in paying extra for this benefit. With many hospitals moving away from ward rooms, it seems to be becoming less of an issue.

A large majority of our membership are in agreement that the ‘sunset clause’ of 18 months for disciplinary notes is too long, and we will be looking at shortening this.

Many of our members are telling us that their workload has increased and the two most prominent causes are the implementation of the Mosaic systems and insufficient staffing due to attrition, layoffs and lack of budget. When considering these issues and causes, we also have to consider how job descriptions factor in, as well as whether or not the management is contributing to the increased workload. The issue of workplace harassment can also be a factor here. Through the survey we see that many members are not aware of the Joint Anti-Harassment Committee language that we bargained in the last round of negotiations. More information about the JAC can be found in the collective agreement, as well as on our website.

The last open comment box of the survey provided a wide range of topics that were raised by our members. Those are comments are harder to categorize quickly, but they are all being read, and will be discussed by the Bargaining Committee.

We will be sending out another survey in the new year. That one will be a bit longer and likely more detailed, but will help us narrow the scope of the information we received from this survey. We hope everyone will take the time to complete that survey as well. Hopefully, we can reach a higher percentage of responses. We have also set up an email dedicated to bargaining, so any comments or questions can be sent to bargaining2016@unifor5555.ca. The content of those emails are shared amongst the Bargaining Committee. Of course you can always contact me, Unit 1 Chairperson, beth.couchman@unifor5555.ca or any of the Workplace/Bargaining Committee members directly as well:

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In Solidarity,

Beth Couchman
Unit 1 Chairperson

