



Tentative agreements reached:

We couldn't have done it without you!

After OPSEU members turned down the government's so-called "final" offer two weeks ago, bargaining began in earnest. Days and nights of negotiations resulted in a tentative agreement that our teams wholeheartedly recommend for ratification.

This agreement goes a long way toward fixing some of the major problems in the OPS, particularly for unclassified employees, employees on Schedule 6, and members with classification complaints.

Ratification vote June 21-23

Ratification votes will be held June 21-23. Voting times and locations for your local will be posted on the web site this week. Meanwhile, your bargaining teams urge all members to read the tentative agreement on the web site and attend information meetings that may be scheduled in your area.

Member-mobilizers recognized

Our special thanks go to the member-mobilizers who organized information meetings and kept sustained pressure on the MPPs over the past weeks and months. We are especially proud that the tentative agreement enshrines their right to time off for mobilizing activities.

POST and CIRCULATE

Agreement highlight summary

Contract retroactive to Jan. 1, 2005; expires Dec. 31, 2008.

Wages:

- **Jan. 1, 2005 (retroactive) 2 per cent;**
- **Jan. 1 2006: 2.25 per cent**
- **Jan. 1 2007: 2.5 per cent;**
- **Jan. 1, 2008: 3 per cent.**

All increases will be compounded annually. The merit pay bonus continues. Additional step on pay grid for Correctional Officer 2 classification.

MERC Terms of Reference

Terms of reference for Ministry Enforcement and Renewal Committee are now enshrined in the collective agreement for the first time. This will ensure that all MERCs will be operated more consistently across the OPS

Workload issues

A letter of understanding is now included in the collective agreement that states the workload issues can now be referred to the appropriate MERCs for resolution. This is an acknowledgement by the employer that workload issues are a growing concern in the OPS and must be resolved through mutual cooperation.

Pay equity/job evaluation

The employer has agreed to a pay equity/job evaluation system that will address long-standing classification problems. Work on this project will begin 60 days after ratification and address the backlog of 4,000 complaints.

Student wages increased

Student wage rates will be increased in four steps to reach \$9.93 an hour by Feb.1, 2007.

Schedule 6 improvement

Schedule 6 employees will now be paid for all hours worked, and they will get overtime after 44 hours.

Scientists at Ministry of the Environment reclassified

134 MoE Scientists have been reclassified to address retention problems and market forces.

Unclassified employees conversion language

Appendix 25, conversion language specifically for the court reporters, court registrars, court monitors, court clerks and court service officers working within the provincial court system has become a reality. Approximately 1,400 unclassified employees will be converted to a newly created classification known as Flexible Part-time Classified employees.

The new language will entitle these employees to benefits, vacation entitlements and a more standardized work schedule. This program, upon ratification, will begin implementation throughout the provincial courthouses in October 2006.

Other unclassified improvements include student wage increases that incorporate the increases to the minimum wage as instituted by

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Agreement highlight (cont'd)

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the provincial government over the life of the collective agreement.

Unclassified employees will now have access to a modified Article 31A.10 that allows for Bereavement Leave provisions and Article 49 that allows for Special and Compassionate Leave entitlements.

Also achieved this round of bargaining is a newly created Letter of Understanding that outlines a new directive in which the employer will reduce a percentage of unclassified employees within the public service each year for the life of the collective agreement by conversion to the classified service.

Job security improvements

Significant improvements in job security provisions have been achieved. Redeployment across ministries is now possible for qualified surplus employees. Redeployment is now possible within a range of classifications whose maximum rate is 5 per cent above and 15 percent below the employees maximum rate of the employee's own classification.

Conditional Assignments are now available to employees who are unable to redeploy or displace. Where there is a vacancy the employer must now place the affected worker in that vacancy for the purpose of retraining.

Pay Equity/Classification

The employer has agreed to the development of a gender-neutral classification system that will be pay equity compliant. There is also agreement to clear the classification backlog through mediation.

Also, seven classifications will receive pay equity adjustments ranging from \$.10 to \$1.40 an hour

Benefits and drug card

Vision care benefits were increased to \$340 every two years and now can be used for laser treatment and one routine eye-exam every second year. VDT eye exams are also available every two years and are capped at \$50.

Effective November 1, 2006, members will be entitled to a drug card with no reduction in the level of benefits. Paper claims will no longer be required.

The inclusion of the liberalization list in the collective agreement means improvement to the current supplies and services including assistance for the purchase of insulin pumps and supplies.

Surplus Factor 80

Members facing lay-off can now access Factor 80. The cost of this provision is fully paid for by the employer.

Increase to LTIP Benefits

LTIP recipients will receive an increase to their benefits equal to the general wage increase negotiated for unified members.

Huge strides in legal protection for correctional workers

Your corrections team is proud to announce that the new deal contains legal indemnification for correctional employees who are found not guilty of criminal charges or who face civil actions.

This is a huge step for people who work in the corrections system and who have been victimized by false charges and lawsuits from inmates.

The tentative agreement contains a new Article that stipulates:

- Full legal coverage when we face federal criminal charges in the course of performing our duties;
- Legal coverage of up to \$5,000 for provincial offences, including driving offences on the job;
- Legal representation for employees involved in civil actions as a result of duties;
- Legal representation at public inquiries or coroner's inquests.

Up to this time, it was left to the union or the employee to bear the costs of legal representation. Now, employees who act in good faith will be supported in their legal battles arising from the tough job that they do.

Weekend premium increased

Weekend premium was \$8 per shift; it is now \$3 per hour for all hours worked.

Probation allowance increase

For Probation and Probation and Parole Officers there is a now a per cent increase in the Probation Officers' allowance, to seven days from five.

Corrections unclassified seniority rights extended

Improvements to the unclassified seniority rights are now extended to all facilities, such as Oak Ridge Division, Probation and Probation and Parole Offices.

Your OPSEU OPS bargaining teams

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The Source is your only accurate source of Central and Corrections Bargaining Team information. Do not rely on gossip and rumours. We will provide the facts. Your editors are Len Mason, Beth Anich and Moira Cowan. *The Source* is authorized for distribution by Barry Scanlon, chair, Corrections Team, Marg Simmons, chair, Central Bargaining Team and Leah Casselman, President.