



TableTalk *update*

CORRECTIONS EDITION

January 6, 2009

Corrections: Reject this offer!

On January 5, 2009, your Corrections Bargaining Team met in Toronto to review the latest offer put forward from the employer. After reviewing all of our options, it is clear that the employer will **NOT** move off of their punitive sick time position or make any substantial improvements. As such, the Team will put this offer to the members, **and asks that all members vote NO** on Jan. 27, 28 and 29 to reject this insulting offer.

Employer leak ‘shameful’

First, a warning to all Corrections Bargaining Unit members: The team has become aware that the employer has leaked a document that is allegedly their latest offer. **This document is not the correct one!** This shameful tactic by the employer (who was constantly worried about our side leaking information) shows how underhanded the employer can be. You can download the correct employer offer from the OPSEU website at http://www.opseu.org/ops/barg2008/employerproposal/Corrections_dec242008.pdf.

This offer has NOT been negotiated

Since Nov. 4, 2008, your team has been trying to negotiate with the employer the demands Corrections locals put forward. These demands included wages, special cases, pensions, premium pay, vacancy management and workload issues.

However, for the past month and a half, the employer has refused to negotiate **ANY** of these items unless the team first agrees to the employer’s horrific sick plan.

Let us be clear: The offer now before us is an offer that has NOT been negotiated by your Corrections Team. It is an offer made by the employer to undercut your bargaining team, in the hopes members will swallow the “poison pill” – namely the sick time takeaway.

Below is an explanation of the employer’s offer, and reasons why you should **REJECT** this offer at the end of January.

Sick time plan rooted firmly in place

As mentioned earlier, the employer has refused to negotiate any of the union’s demands until the team agrees to their sick time takeaway for correctional officers and youth workers **ONLY**.

In December, the union signed an agreement with the employer to move the issue of correctional officer and youth worker sick time from the Central Table to the Corrections table. We wanted to ensure that the team that negotiated this issue directly represented the two classifications that were affected.

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Only Corrections Bargaining Unit affected

Only the Corrections Bargaining Team has recommended that their members reject the employers offer. Affected job classifications are listed on pages 467-472 of the current OPS collective agreement.

On Dec. 22, the team published an issue sheet on the employer proposal - **Targeted benefits? THIS PLAN IS SICK** (http://www.opseu.org/ops/barg2008/issue-sheet/sickleave_v2.pdf). None of these provisions have changed. The employer still wants to remove correctional officers and youth workers from the OPS Short Term Sickness Plan (Article 44) and implement a new plan to replace it. Under this plan:

- Sick time will be managed by an outside insurance carrier.
- Sick time is only accrued at a rate of five hours per month, **only if you have full attendance that month.**
- After four consecutive days of absence without pay, Correctional Officers and Youth Workers move to 66 2/3 per cent pay on the fifth day **if** the claim is approved by the insurance carrier.
- If you do not have any sick time in the bank, **any absence that is less than five consecutive days is unpaid.**
- If the insurance company denies the claim, the employee gets paid nothing.
- This denial is not grievable. An appeal must be made to the Joint Insured Benefits Review Committee (a joint management-union committee that has no adjudication process).

Since Dec. 22, the employer **has made one change**; a change that they mistakenly thought the team would accept. The employer has proposed that a Joint Attendance Strategy Implementation Committee (management-union) be established to improve sick time. Of course, there's a catch.

Under the employer's proposal, the current OPS sick plan would stay in place. In Year 1 of the agreement, the yearly provincial sick time average for correctional officers and youth workers must fall to 13.33 days. In Year 2 of the agreement, the provincial sick time average must fall to 10.66 days. If **either** of those targets is not met, **the NEW employer sick time plan goes into effect.** Even if both targets are met for the first two years, the new employer plan remains a threat and will be implemented anytime the

yearly sick time average exceeds 10.66 days. And yes, the second target is below the current ministry-established provincial sick time target of 11 days.

It's not hard to read between the lines. Since this committee is a joint management-union committee, all the employer has to do to get their new sick plan is ensure that the committee **fails**. In Las Vegas, this is called a sure bet, with the employer holding the loaded dice.

Your Corrections Bargaining Team, from Day 1, has stood firm and completely opposed this plan. We believe that there can be constructive methods to address long-standing issues that are the root of sick time problems. However, we will not accept a plan that punishes any of our members.

The rest of the employer's offer contains so-called "improvements" that only sound good until you really think about them. **And don't forget: They are all contingent on acceptance of the sick time plan!** They are:

A 50-30 Pension Plan

Don't confuse this with Factor 80. In response to the union's proposal for a reduced pension factor for public safety occupations (as allowed under federal legislation) as well as a permanent Factor 80, the employer responded with their "50-30" plan for correctional officers and youth workers only. As opposed to Factor 80 (age + years of service = 80), under 50-30 you must be **at least 50 years old AND have 30 years of service.** The employer has offered correctional officers and youth workers an extra six per cent in wages which would *just* pay the cost for this "improvement." However, during the four-year life of the collective agreement, **less than 350 members would be able to access this provision.** This is totally inadequate.

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Unclassified rollovers

The employer has proposed to roll over 250 unclassified positions to permanent classified positions during the four-year contract. Sound good? Consider this: During the previous collective agreement, the Corrections MERC Team negotiated **nearly 500 rollovers**. In those terms, the employer's proposal is actually a *takeaway*.

Here's something else to consider: If those 350 members took the employer's 50-30 pension plan, the 250 unclassified rollovers would still leave the bargaining unit short 100 classified positions on top of the regular vacancies that occur. Some deal. Additionally if the sick time takeaway passes, forcing classified workers to come to work sick, unclassified hours will be greatly reduced and may result in unclassified contracts not being renewed.

The team firmly believes that unclassified 40-hour work weeks will disappear, preventing unclassifieds from earning attendance credits, Appendix 24 seniority and affecting continuous service date.

Increase to meal allowance

The employer proposes to increase the overtime meal allowance from \$10 to \$11.25. A huge increase. So, if you are asked the question, your answer is: "No. I still can't afford fries with that."

Increase to on-call pay

On-call pay will be increased from \$1 per hour to \$1.25 per hour in the first year of the agreement. In the *fourth* year of the agreement, it will be increased to \$1.40. Yes, it is technically an improvement, but for who?

Schedule 6 overtime

Schedule 6 Probation and Probation and Parole Officers would receive time and one-half pay for working overtime on weekends and holidays under the offer, but only if pre-authorized by the employer. "Pre-authorized" also replaces the word "required" that is in the current agreement. Translation? Overtime will **never** be "pre-authorized."

Hiring of PO3 positions

The employer wants to create **only** 10 (ten) Probation Officer 3 positions, province-wide - six in Corrections (for 118 offices) and four in Children and Youth Services (for 64 offices). These positions would be filled by competition.

Since the creation of the PO3 position, NONE have been hired. This completely insufficient employer proposal was in response to the union's demand that the PO3 wages be converted to additional steps on the PO2 grid.

Which, of course, the employer ignored.

Don't forget what else was ignored

What is most important about this so-called "offer" by the employer is what it *doesn't* have. Don't forget what **you** said was important for your next collective agreement, which helped form the team's opening position on Nov. 12, 2008 (http://www.opseu.org/ops/barg2008/pdf/CORRECTIONSopeningproposal_081112.pdf).

- Clear identification for work of the Corrections Bargaining Unit – **IGNORED**
- Improvements for employer-requested shift changes – **IGNORED**
- Increase to shift premiums – **IGNORED**
- Increase to weekend premiums – **IGNORED**

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- Improvements to call-back provisions – **IGNORED**
- Improvements to standby time – **IGNORED**
- Improvements to holiday pay – **IGNORED**
- Improvements to the legal indemnification provisions – **IGNORED**
- Protection against employer abuse of surveillance technology – **IGNORED**
- Increase of PO/PPO allowance from seven days per year to 20 days per year – **IGNORED** (*current allowance only recognizes unpaid overtime of less than one hour per week*)
- Workload issues across the entire bargaining unit – **IGNORED**
- Delete Correctional Officer 1, Probation Officer 1 and Recreational Officer 1 classification grids. Entry level for these positions would be at the CO2, PO2 and RO2 grids respectively – **IGNORED**
- Add a retention grid steps to all classifications at the 8, 15 and 25 years (similar to OPPA) – **IGNORED**
- Some special case submissions from the local demand set process were completely ignored. Other special case adjustments were minimized and contingent on sick time takeaways.

Almost all of these improvements are to compensate members of the Corrections Bargaining Unit for the pain and suffering of dealing with hazardous work environments, high stress, interacting with often dangerous and violent offenders, losing precious time with family and friends, missing holidays and shouldering a tremendous responsibility in the protection of the public.

Callously, the employer (the same employer who said a few short months ago that you were the “key to our success,”) **has ignored every demand** that would increase morale and improve your working lives.

Reject this offer!

In the coming weeks, members of the Corrections Bargaining Team will be travelling to local and regional meetings to answer your questions about this offer. Watch for information about meetings in your area.

Every member, whether working in the community or in an institution, should be insulted by this offer. **On Jan. 27-29, your Corrections Bargaining Team asks that you give us a 100 per cent rejection and strike vote.** You are worth much more than this. You know it. We know it. And the employer knows it. And it’s time for us to remind them, as only Corrections can.

In summing up, previous gains for corrections came **only after you rejected the first offer.** Turn this offer down and give your bargaining team the mandate to get the **real** settlement we all deserve.

We thank you for your support.

Authorized for distribution:



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