



# OPS CONTRACT 2002

Information for OPSEU members in the Ontario Public Service

March 13, 2002

## What is the strike about?

### A summary of issues on the Unified Bargaining Unit table and the Central table

#### This strike is fundamentally about three things:

- 1. Renewal of the public service** – the union has proposed several changes to the collective agreement, including an end to contracting out, a way to look at contracting in and protection for employees who blow the whistle on government waste and wrongdoing. The employer has rejected every one of these proposals.
- 2. Respect for employees who do the work** – the union has proposed wage and benefit improvements that allow employees to keep pace with inflation. It has also proposed making it easier for the tens of thousands of casual (unclassified) employees, who occupy what should be permanent positions, to get permanent jobs. And it has proposed a continuation of early retirement provisions. The employer has rejected these proposals.
- 3. Rejection of employer take-aways** – the employer has proposed almost \$13 million in cuts to benefits (based on their costing) in return for “improvements” worth less than \$3 million. The employer has proposed to create “term classified” positions that would block current employees access to promotions and permanent jobs. The employer has proposed to take away their employees’ ability to use their own pension surplus money as they wish. The employer has proposed to make it much more difficult for casual (unclassified) employees to get converted. The employer has proposed to make it much more difficult for employees to get jobs through postings.

# Unified Bargaining Unit table – Employer proposals

## Wages:

1.95 per cent in each year of a three-year agreement, 1 per cent in the first year in return for concessions limiting the requirement to post jobs and making unclassified conversion more difficult.

Student wages unchanged, except in GTA (\$1.00/hour increase) and summer law students (\$16.40/hr first year; \$18.40/hr second year).

## Special Case Increases:

Nurses (10 per cent); Scientists (8 per cent); Communication officers (8 per cent); OCWA employees (salary note based on licences obtained).

## Call back:

An unlimited number of call-backs (not to the regular workplace) in a four-hour period would be treated and paid as one, single call-back.

## Schedule 6:

Overtime paid at the half-time rate up to 48 hours per week, at the straight-time rate over 48 hours per week.

## Shift Premiums:

Increase to \$0.78 per hour for all hours worked between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m. No Weekend premium.

# Central Table – Employer Proposals

## Pay for performance:

1 per cent of payroll “available” to employees at top step of grid. Only available to individual employees at managers’ discretion. Cannot be grieved.

## Benefits:

### Cuts:

- Cover only drugs that require doctor’s prescription
- \$8.00 dispensing fee cap
- Mandatory generic substitution/pricing covering 90 per cent of generic product cost
- Exclude fertility drugs
- Dental Plan deductible: \$100/year single/family
- Extend dental recall period from 6 to 9 months (except for children 12 and under)
- Dental Fee guide lag of 1 year in each year of collective agreement
- Eliminate fluoride treatments for adults
- Orthopaedic Shoe/Orthotics coverage: 75 per cent of cost for orthopaedics – 1 pair/year max. \$400/pair; 100 per cent of cost

for orthotics – 1 pair/year max. \$400/pair

- Eliminate Out of Country coverage

### “Improvements” (including caps):

- Vision Care: \$225 every 2 years
- Paramedical – All Practitioners: \$25/visit capped at \$500 per practitioner
- Psychologist (incl. MSW) - \$25/half hour, annual cap \$500
- Speech Therapist - \$25/half-hour annual cap \$500
- Dental: Major restorative – reduce employee paid share from 60 per cent to 50 per cent, annual cap increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200
- Semi-Private Hospital Room - increase to \$85/day
- Hearing Aids - \$500 every 5 years

### Term classified:

Term classified classifications set up. Employer free to set wages at whatever level they choose. Vacancies not posted. Term classified employees receive limited LTIP coverage, capped benefits (dental: \$100 deductible, 9-

month recall, no orthodontics; no non-prescription drugs, no out-of-country coverage, cap on orthotics – one pair per year, max. \$500). Term Classified employees can opt out of the pension plan. Term Classified employees get 16 weeks’ notice (or pay in lieu) of termination/cancellation of contract.

**Pensions:**

Union cannot use pension surplus to improve terms and conditions of employment (including, but not limited to, early retirement). Union members’ money will pay for employer liability resulting from changes proposed by the union. Pension plan disputes may not be arbitrated at the Grievance Settlement Board. Factor 80 for only surplus employees extended for life of the collective agreement.

**Employment equity:**

Delete employment equity provisions from collective agreement, replace with appendix setting up a project to advertise some vacancies specially to designated groups.

**Job postings:**

Employer can hire without posting where “similar vacancy or new position” (which could

be anywhere in the province, or in a different ministry) was held within the last 12 months. Employer can fill job without competition where an incumbent has had the position on an acting basis for 18 months. Employer does not have to acknowledge applications.

**Unclassified conversion:**

“Same work” trigger for unclassified conversion limited to “essentially the same work assignment.”

**Bereavement:**

Stepson, stepdaughter, stepmother, stepfather, same-sex spouse, step-grandparent, step-grandchild added to bereavement leave.

**Kilometric rate:**

Improved.

**LTIP:**

Same increase as the remainder of the bargaining unit.

**Internship:**

Internship program continued. 150 interns per year.

## **Major Union proposals that have been rejected by the employer**

**Renewal measures:**

The union proposed: to create a contracting-in committee, a moratorium on contracting out, proclamation of “whistle-blower” legislation, and language changes. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Job Security:**

The union proposed improvements to job security language. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Pensions:**

The union proposed to extend the Factor 80 program and another pension improvement that

will allow you retire with more money. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Benefits:**

The union proposed improved benefits for classified employees and access to benefits for unclassified employees. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Wages:**

The union is currently proposing 5 per cent per year over a three year agreement. The employer has rejected this proposal.

**Unclassified issues:**

The union has proposed making it easier for unclassified employees to gain classified status and other improvements for unclassified and seasonal employees. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Family issues:**

The union has proposed improvements in pregnancy and parental leave corresponding to changes in the law. The employer has rejected these proposals.

**Classification:**

The union has proposed a better way to solve classification disputes. The employer has rejected this proposal.



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