



SEFPO

FRONT *lines*

June 27, 2002

A bulletin for
members in the
Ontario Public
Service

Court office workers win big

Hundreds of Ontario court office workers will see their wages rise after a landmark classification settlement signed Wednesday.

The deal between OPSEU and the government will see 429 workers classified upward. Some 349 Office Administration staff, working as OAG-6s and OAG-7s under 25 different job titles, will be reclassified as OAG-8s with the title Client Service Representative. A further 80 Judicial Secretaries will be reclassified upward as OAG-9s.

The settlement grew out of over 180 grievances from court office workers, some dating back to 1999. In a review of court office jobs, the employer agreed to include all Office Administration staff in the same jobs in the settlement.

Seventy-seven workers will be classified downward, but their wages are fully protected by “gold-circling.” Gold-circling means their wages stay in the current pay range. As well, workers continue to move upwards on their old pay range. They also receive any future pay raises of their old pay range.

Total retroactive pay to OPSEU members will top \$500,000. Retro payments are calculated from either:

- 30 days prior to the date of the grievance, for those who grieved; or
- April 1, 2002 for those who did not grieve.

The agreement applies equally to classified and unclassified employees.

To view the agreements covering Client Service Representatives and Judicial Secretaries, check the OPSEU web site at <http://www.opseu.org/ops/frontlinesjun27.htm>.

Watch for more details in the days and weeks ahead.

Courtroom wages under review, too

OPSEU is also working at the Joint System Subcommittee to speed up the MAG’s review of the wages of courtroom workers.

“Courtroom workers who want to speed up the progress of their reclassification should do two things,” says OPSEU Grievance Officer Tim Mulhall. “First, if you are wrongly classified for the work you do, grieve. This will increase

your retroactive pay in the future. Second, put pressure on your boss to help speed up the review of courtroom wages. When you take action, things happen.”

A great deal

“This great deal is a direct result of the activism of OPSEU members,” said OPSEU president Leah Casselman. “Those grievances showed just how angry members were. Our 54-day strike shone a spotlight on the courts and revealed them for the sweatshops they are. That’s why we’re seeing a change in tone coming from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

“If members keep the heat on, we will achieve our goal of rebuilding Ontario’s courts on a strong foundation of good jobs.”

OPSEU has hearing dates at the Grievance Settlement Board to deal with 197 Conversion grievances in the MAG. Unclassified workers who are entitled to become classified under Article 31.15 of the OPS collective agreement should grieve if they have not already done so.

“Save the POSO” campaign gears up

OPS members at the Province of Ontario Savings Office (POSO) got a shock on Budget day for the second year in a row.

Last year it was plans to sell POSO to a private bidder.

This year it’s a bill to let the government sell POSO – so it would not be caught in the same court bind as the Hydro One sale.

OPSEU represents about 150 people in more than 20 POSO offices, and is putting up a fight on their behalf. Union staff and members are working with POSO customers to fight the privatization, and to protect members’ rights.

There is more information on the OPSEU website at <http://www.opseu.org/campaign/posoindex.htm>.

There’s an on-line petition under **POSO Post, Issue 1**. Sign it and recommend it to your friends. Make paper copies if you can. Send signed copies to Howard Hampton, MPP, or Gerry Phillips, MPP at Queen’s Park. Members in southwestern Ontario have already

sent in more than 1,000 names. The website also has flyers and a sample letter to Premier Ernie Eves. Call your MPP. Make it clear the POSO belongs to the **people of Ontario** and is not for sale!

As the campaign develops, there will be more ways you can help.

Retroactive pay calculation

In reply to many questions: Retroactive pay flowing from the new OPS collective agreement will cover the period between

return to work and the time that you get the right pay, as well as the pre-strike period.

Frontlines echoes with members

You have spoken.

A few members had other suggestions, and there was some support for *Between the Lines*, but the name that resonates most strongly is **Frontlines**.

Here’s some of the feedback:

“My vote is to stay with **Frontlines**. We are still the Frontline of defense and we will always be the people that actually help the taxpayers.” - **Kathleen Demareski**, Local 340

“**Frontlines** is a term that I would associate with a battle scene. Guess what? This is a war we are in with this government. The eight weeks that we all spent on the picket lines sure felt like a war.” - **Lou Slosel**, Local 549

“I prefer **Frontlines** since we continue being the Frontline

personnel for the government of the day.” - **Marinus Verwey**, Local 635.

“Although we’re no longer on the picket lines, OPS workers are all on the front lines in one way or another: we are all certainly on the front lines of the struggle to rebuild public services.” - **Kevin Brown**, secretary, Local 528

“**Frontlines** reminds us that OPSEU members have to be vigilant in regards to our employer at all times to protect the services that we provide.” - **John Agius**, Local 636

“I’m voting to retain **Frontlines**. We should maintain our links with our history. Too often, we forget where we came from and how we got here. In my last newsletter, I quoted [CLC President] Ken

Georgetti’s statements about how we got weekends and 40-hour weeks. We need to be reminding our members that we are the ones who fought for what we have, for what we too often take for granted.” - **Ken Palmer**, Ministry of Education, Local 456

“I like the name **Frontlines**. I would like this newsletter to be a continuation of bargaining news and information.” - **Beth Anich**, President, Local 601

“I like **Frontlines**. It’s concise, it’s reflective of the intent of the copy and it’s part of our OPSEU history.” - **Kay McLeod**, Regional Secretary, Fonthill office.

“**Frontlines** really says it all for those of us who were out there every day.” - **Sandra Vey**, Ministry of Labour, Local 527

2 Check the web: www.opseu.org has the latest on everything.