

# BARGAINING UPDATE



## LEGAL AID

### LOCAL 118 CHAPTER 019 - ALL STAFF

## Wage talks begin, but the employer walks out of bargaining

### *Legal Aid presents insulting wage package, files for informal mediation*

We finally met with Legal Aid on April 8 after they cancelled several rounds of meetings. Unfortunately, our day ended with Legal Aid walking away from the bargaining table.

We filed a bad faith bargaining complaint with the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) about Legal Aid's delays, and that seems to have struck a nerve.

The employer claims bargaining has broken down because of problems with the relationship at the bargaining table.

However, the only problems are because of Legal Aid. The employer has repeatedly delayed bargaining, disrespected us at every turn, and has now offered insulting wage proposals.

Now, Legal Aid has filed for informal mediation.

#### **Bargaining breaks down**

Legal Aid told us that they wanted to go to informal mediation immediately after presenting their wage proposal.

We feel that this was another attempt to delay bargaining, and another example of their disrespect for us and the bargaining process.

We told them we wanted to discuss wage proposals instead. They responded by walking out of negotiations.

We told them we would not accept more delays and urged them to come prepared for bargaining when we meet again.

Legal Aid responded by moving ahead with their threat to file for informal mediation.

Your team again told the employer that we will not agree to informal mediation. Since both parties must agree to enter informal mediation, we gave the employer the option to return to bargaining or enter formal mediation.

Moving directly to formal mediation will allow us to hold a strike vote if a settlement can't be reached.

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## Wage proposals

Legal Aid arrived at our meeting with an insulting wage proposal of 7.5% over four years with no benefits improvements. This is a carbon copy of the wage offer forced on AUPE members across the province by the government's Provincial Bargaining Compensation Office (PBCO).

Legal Aid also wants lower wages for new hires. They proposed reducing the starting wages for new administrative assistants by approximately \$2,000 a year. This is a nearly 5 per cent wage rollback and is completely unacceptable.

Your team countered with a three-year agreement with the following raises:

**Year 1:** 13%  
**Year 2:** 6.5%  
**Year 3:** 6.5%

We also proposed:

- Eliminating the first step of all current pay grids;
- Eliminating the first four steps of the current pay grids for Administrative Support 2 and Payables Clerk—these steps fall below a living wage in Edmonton and Calgary;
- Standardizing the pay grid to 6% per step;
- A cost-of-living adjustment if inflation exceeds wage increases.

## Next meeting

Our next bargaining dates are scheduled for May 6 and June 17 and 18. We hope Legal Aid will finally show us the respect we deserve and come to these meeting ready to bargain.

## Online Zoom Q&A – April 24

We are hosting an online member question and answer meeting on Thursday, April 24 at 6:00 p.m. We encourage all members to join us for important conversations about what comes next in bargaining.

## Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8648094510?pwd=K2ZNcEU0RjIwZV RXZGE5YW9GYngrUT09&omn=83841907418>

**Meeting ID:** 864 809 4510

**Passcode:** 230399

## We need leaders – register for Strike Captain Training

We must be prepared for the possibility of a strike or lockout.

Legal Aid has made it clear – they do not respect us or the work we do. They have no intention of agreeing to the wages and contract we deserve without a fight.

Register today for an upcoming Strike Captain Course. This in-person course is just 1 day, and you will receive time off work to take it.

Learn more about being a Strike Captain and register for a course near you.

Keep wearing red to show your solidarity! Email photos of you and your coworkers wearing red to [photos@aupe.org](mailto:photos@aupe.org) and we will share them on AUPE's social media.



## Sign up for MyAUPE

Stay up to date on bargaining—create a MyAUPE account at [www.aupe.org/myaupe](http://www.aupe.org/myaupe). Signing up ensures you never miss important union news.

Please contact a member of your negotiating team if you have any questions about this update.

