

BARGAINING UPDATE



ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES GENERAL SUPPORT SERVICES & LAMONT HEALTH CARE CENTRE GSS

LOCALS 054, 056, 057, 058, 095

AHS General Support Services: July town halls recap and FAQs

Your negotiating team wishes to thank all General Support Services members for joining our town halls.

Thousands of you joined us on July 2 and 3 for important conversations about bargaining. Your team appreciates the opportunity to connect with you and answer your questions.

We know there are still lots of questions out there, as well as members who were unable to attend the town halls. Here are answers to some of the most common questions members asked.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. When does bargaining start again?

We have shared new proposals with AHS. We hope these new proposals bring AHS back to the bargaining table so that we can make more progress without waiting for mediation.

We will not know when bargaining begins again until we hear from AHS.

2. How much of a pay increase are we asking for?

We have proposed 4 year deal with 7% increases each year, totalling a 28% wage increase.

April 1, 2024 - 7%
April 1, 2025 - 7%
April 1, 2026 - 7%
April 1, 2027 - 7%

We have also proposed 2 per cent long service pay for members who have worked with AHS for over 20 years.

3. Are we asking for the same things for all members?

General Support Services is diverse. We work in so many different jobs it is impossible to list them all.

With minor exceptions, we are asking for the same wages, benefits, job security, and working conditions for all AUPE members.

AUPE NEGOTIATING TEAM- AHS GENERAL SUPPORT SERVICES NEGOTIATING TEAM

Local 054

Charity Hill charity.johanson@gmail.com
Christine Madigan (A)
christinecmadigan@gmail.com

Local 056

Juanita Cozicar jcozicar@telus.net
Kristina Javorsky (A)
kjavorsky123@gmail.com

Local 057

Wendy Kicia wendykicia@hotmail.com
Janice Drader (A)
draderjanice@gmail.com

Local 058

Dave Ibach d1322j@gmail.com
Marlin Meyer (A)
marlindmeyer@hotmail.com

Local 095

Anna Silva a.silva@shaw.ca
James Sullivan (A)
sullivanlocal95@gmail.com

Lamont Health Care Centre

Carol Palichuk
carolpalichuk@hotmail.com
Sherri-Lee Berezanski (A)
makbrayland@hotmail.com

AUPE RESOURCE STAFF

Chris Dickson Lead Negotiator
c.dickson@aupe.org
Kate Robinson Negotiator
k.robinson@aupe.org

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4. How long is our Essential Services Agreement (ESA) going to take?

AUPE has signed off on our Essential Services Agreement. Your negotiating team believes it is ready to be finalized. We are now waiting for AHS to sign off on the ESA.

The process has been slow, but your team has done its due diligence and has thanks you for your patience.

Creating an effective ESA is not easy or quick. AUPE takes its responsibilities and obligations under the ESA seriously.

5. Will we get retro pay?

Your team is asking for full retro pay.

Retro pay would go back to when our last agreement expired: April 1, 2024. It also includes the next increase, which should have happened starting April 1, 2025.

6. How do we make the public care about the issues?

Talk to your family, friends, and coworkers about the challenges you face at work and the crisis facing Alberta's public health care system.

We can improve AHS – for us and for Albertans – by winning big in bargaining. Better working conditions for us means better care conditions for patients.

Share the information you learned during the town halls, including this update, and keep asking questions. We need your support and solidarity.

AUPE is also launching a public awareness campaign later this summer. The advertising campaign will be all about the important work we do as General Support Services staff.

7. Are we going on strike?

No, but that is a decision members can make if we get to that point. Strikes can force our employer to give us what we deserve, but we are not there yet. Your negotiating team believes we can achieve a good collective agreement at the bargaining table.

Nevertheless, we must be ready for a strong strike vote, if it comes to that. A big turnout and overwhelming support for a strike gives us leverage at the bargaining table. A strong strike vote would show AHS that we are willing to do whatever it takes. Sometimes, that's enough to convince the employer to give us what we deserve without even going on strike.

8. During a strike, will I be a Designated Essential Service Worker (DESW) or will I be on the picket line?

The ESA will say which job duties are essential and how many AUPE members of each classification are needed to keep the worksite running. You may be scheduled as a DESW some days, and other days you will be out on the strike line.

AHS will schedule DESWs in the first week of a strike, then AUPE will take over if the strike continues. AHS will provide you with these schedules.

9. If I get paid as an essential worker and walk the picket line for 30 hours, do I get paid overtime?

AUPE members get paid \$700 per week if they clock-in for 30 hours on the strike line. If you work enough shifts as a DESW that AHS pays you \$700 or more, you are no longer eligible for strike pay. You can, however, still walk the picket line in solidarity! We're all in this together.

10. How do we increase the number of members with MyAUPE accounts?

MyAUPE accounts are so important. All members should create one! You must sign up for a MyAUPE account if you have not already.

You need an account to vote for a new collective agreement, vote to strike, and collect strike pay quickly.

Ensure your coworkers know how important it is to create an account. You can also contact AUPE's Organizing department to schedule an educational Lunch 'n' Learn or sign-up event at your worksite.

11. Why do we not want to go to mediation? That's how UNA got their agreement.

Mediation can be a good tool, just like a strike. But just like any tool, there are limitations and drawbacks. Mediation can take a long time, and we cannot begin mediation without waiting for our final ESA.

Mediators also don't decide anything, they just make recommendations. What if they make recommendations that aren't good enough, or that members disagree with? We would be in the same situation as we are now.

Regardless, your team believes we can reach a good deal at the bargaining table without a mediator.

Thank you all for participating in our town halls! Please contact your negotiating team representative if you have any questions.