

NOVEMBER
2025

THE MEMBERS' voice



THE NEWSLETTER OF LOCAL 15, VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORKERS

800,000 strong—and still rising!



In a major milestone, CUPE has officially surpassed 800,000 members nationwide.

At a time when workers' rights are under threat, CUPE has made it a strategic priority to ensure more workers have the protection of an active, fighting union. Across sectors, CUPE continues to build and grow as Canada's largest, strongest union. With a million members on the horizon, our power is still rising. (See photos and update on page 10.)

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NOVEMBER 2025 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership and General Society meetings will be held on November 26, 2025 via the Zoom platform. You will be sent an invitation by email if the union office has a personal email address on file for you.

Details will also be posted at www.cupe15.org. If you do not receive emails from the union office and would like to attend this meeting, please call us at 604-879-4671 or email us at email@cupe15.org to update your information.

The agendas and other related documents will be posted on or before 12:00 noon on November 26, 2025. There will be a draw at the end of the meeting and three lucky winners will receive a gift card (retailers TBA at the time of the draw). Child and dependant care reimbursement is available as per eligibility requirements in CUPE Local 15 Bylaw Section 31.

Important Note – Virtual General Membership Meeting Invitations
After registering for the Virtual General Membership meeting, please do not share your link with fellow members. If they did not receive the invitation and would like to attend, please ask them to contact the union office and provide us with their contact information directly. Once this is done, an invitation will be sent to them and they can register to receive their own link. This is important to facilitate accurate attendance records.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

- Union and Society Budgets
- Financial Statement
- Eligibility to Stand as a CUPE Local 15 Delegate
- General Membership Meeting Survey
- President Activity Report
- Notices of Motion – See page 4
- Committee and Staff Reports

WE ACKNOWLEDGE...

We live, work and play on the unceded land of the Coast Salish peoples—*Sḵwxwú7mesh* (Squamish), *səlilwətaɬ* (Tsleil-Waututh) and *xʷməθkʷəyəm* (Musqueam) Nations.



Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement – Serving our members' interests by advancing and defending their rights and the rights of all workers.

Vision Statement – A union founded on respect and advocacy that instills pride and a sense of belonging for the benefit of all.



Return undeliverable
Canadian addresses to:
CUPE Local 15
545 W. 10th Ave.
Vancouver, BC
V5Z 1K9



Remembrance Day



SANTINO SCARDILLO,
ACTING PRESIDENT

by Santino
Scardillo, Acting
President

Each year on November 11th, we pause together, if only for a moment, to remember the courage and sacrifice of those who served, and

those who continue to serve, so that we may live and work in freedom and peace.

For many of us, Remembrance Day is personal. We think of family members who wore the uniform, neighbours who answered

the call, or the veterans we see in our communities whose quiet strength reminds us that freedom is never free. Their stories, often told humbly, carry lessons about resilience, solidarity, and the importance of standing up for what is right—values that deeply connect with our work as a union.

As we approach Remembrance Day, I also want to take a moment to recognize National Indigenous Veterans' Day on November 8th. We honour the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit veterans whose courage and service have often gone unacknowledged in history. Their sacrifices and contributions are an essential part of the story we remember this month, and we owe them our deepest gratitude.

As a labour movement, we understand that progress often comes through collective

struggle. The men and women who served did so with a similar spirit of solidarity—looking out for one another, working together toward a common goal, and believing in something greater than themselves. On this day, we honour not only their bravery, but also their commitment to fairness, community, and peace.

At 11:00 a.m., I encourage everyone to take that moment of silence—whether you are at work, at home, or out in the community—to remember and to reflect. Let us think of those who gave their lives, those who came home changed, and those who continue to serve today; and let us recommit ourselves to building a world where peace, respect, and justice prevail.



October reflections

by Cynthia Schadt, Interim Secretary-Treasurer



CYNTHIA SCHADT
INTERIM
SECRETARY-TREASURER

October brought unexpected turns—and with them, valuable lessons.

Stepping into the role of Interim Secretary-Treasurer was the first surprise. It has been a fast-paced and eye-opening experience, requiring swift decision-making

based on rapidly evolving information. I have had to navigate unfamiliar processes, distinguish between outdated and current

directives, and make choices that reflect the needs of our entire membership—not just the loudest voices in the room.

This month also underscored the importance of mental health. At the Bottom Line Conference, I was reminded how vital it is to care for our well-being, especially during times of transition. Change can trigger anxiety, and I have seen how it can cause people to freeze or withdraw. Recognizing this has helped me approach challenges with greater empathy and understanding.

At the CUPE National Convention, I was deeply inspired by first-time delegates who courageously stepped up to the microphone to speak on resolutions. Their bravery and clarity were powerful reminders of the strength of our collective voice. I also witnessed moments of solidarity—when individuals in need were met with

immediate support from others. These acts of compassion exemplify the heart of our union.

Closer to home, I want to acknowledge those who spoke up at our recent General Membership Meeting. Their words sparked connection and unity—proof that when a few speak, many can come together.

As we reflect on our shared journey, it is important to remember that while we may differ in our reasons for becoming union advocates, we all share a commitment to fairness, dignity, and respect. Let us continue to create space for diverse voices and perspectives. If someone sees things differently, take a moment to sit down with them and connect—you may find you have more in common than you think.

Thank you for being part of this journey.



Bursary Thanks

Thank you to CUPE Local 15 for the VMECW Society Dependant Bursary that I was awarded as I begin my post-secondary studies.

I am writing to express my thanks. I am truly grateful for your support, which will help ease the financial burden of my studies and allow me to focus more fully on my academic goals.

This bursary not only provides financial assistance, but also serves as a meaningful reminder of the value that CUPE Local 15 - VMECW places on education and family support.

Thank you again for your generosity and encouragement.

Sincerely,
Jillian Funnell

GOOD AND WELFARE POLICY 10.4.1

Remembrances, Condolences, and Congratulations

Call the union office at 604-879-4671 to let us know about a co-worker who is eligible as per the policy below and we will send flowers or a fruit basket on behalf of CUPE Local 15:

10.4.1 Upon the office being notified of the following occurrences, the Society shall provide either flowers or a fruit basket, or make a donation to a specified charity, at a total cost of up to \$100.

- i) Death of a member or retired member
- ii) Serious illness or injury of a member where absence exceeds two weeks
- iii) Death of an immediate family member, including spouse, child, parent, or sibling
- iv) Birth or adoption of a child

10.4.2 Upon the office being notified of the death of a member's extended family member, the Society shall send a card of condolence.

DECISIONS

BY THE EXECUTIVE

At their meetings on October 21, 2025, the Executive and Society Boards made the following decisions:

- To approve the Financial Statements ending August 31, 2025.
- To purchase a wreath for the National Aboriginal Veterans' Day wreath laying ceremony at a cost of \$125.
- To recommend defeat of a Notion of Motion to amend Bylaw 25.1.2 – Eligibility to Stand as a CUPE 15 Delegate. See Notices of Motion on page 4 for more information.
- To recommend a motion to conduct a survey regarding General Membership Meeting times and format. See Notices of Motion on page 4 for more information.
- To recommend defeat of a motion requiring the President to submit a monthly activity report to the members. See Notices of Motion on page 4 for more information.
- To forward a document regarding a proposed Stewards' Preamble to CUPE Legal for review.
- To appoint Jennifer Flor as the Primary OH&S Representative at North Shore Community Health Services.
- To appoint Celine Hsin as the Alternative OH&S Representative at North Shore Community Health Services.
- To elect Susy McKay and Aaron Cook as members of the CUPE Local 15 Staff Advisory Committee.
- To approve book off for picket line support for the BCGEU strike. Time and location to be determined.

BY THE MEMBERS

At the General Membership meeting on October 22, 2025, the members in attendance made the following decisions:

- To receive the Financial Statement ending August 31, 2025.
- To amend Bylaws 11.1 – Officers and Trustees, 17.4.3.1 Lead Shop Steward Roles and Responsibilities, and 11.7.1 Terms of Employment and Benefits of Full-Time Elected Positions. See page 5 for amended bylaws.
- To elect Mark Somo to fill the vacant College/University Sector Representative position on the Executive Board for the remainder of a three-year term ending May 24, 2028.
- To donate \$2,500 to the Junior Black Achievement Awards Society.
- To amend the Executive recommendation to Bylaw 9.2 Notice of Motion re: Members' Voice by changing the word **or** to **and** in sentence 4. See October 2025 Members' Voice for more details. Note: This amendment must be approved by CUPE National.
- To amend Bylaws 19.2 Grievance Committee, 12.1.1 Nomination of Officers, 12.3.1 Election of Officers, and 12.8.1 By-Elections. See October Members' Voice for details. Note: These amendments must be approved by CUPE National.
- To defeat a motion to add an article regarding Campaign Materials to Section 12 of the bylaws.
- To defeat a motion to add an article regarding Communications with Returning Officers to Section 12.4 of the bylaws.
- To defeat a motion to add an article regarding Campaign Rules to Section 12.4 of the bylaws.
- To destroy the ballots from the City et al Ratification of Agreement meeting in September 2025.
- To destroy the ballots from the Langara College Ratification of Proposals meetings in October 2025.
- To approve Honourary Life Membership for recently retired Parks member and Shop Steward, Subrata Dasgupta.

VSB Job Share Opportunity

SSA looking for a job share partner for two days a week at Renfrew Elementary school, starting in January 2026. Days are flexible.

Please email marylabonte23@gmail.com.

Notices of Motion

Union

1. 2026 Proposed Budget

The Executive recommends approval of the proposed 2026 CUPE Local 15 Budget.

2. Bylaw Amendment 25.1.2 – Eligibility to Stand as a CUPE 15 Delegate

The Executive recommends defeat of the following motion:

It was moved by Sophie Bennett to amend Bylaw 25.1.2 as follows:

(**Bold** text denotes new language.)

The President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer will have first preference to the CUPE National and CUPE BC Conventions. Additional delegates will be elected by the membership as follows:

City Sector – 2 delegates

K-12 Sector – 2 delegates

Parks Sector – 2 delegates

Health Sector – 2 delegates

College and University Sector

– 1 delegate each

Cultural Sector – 1 delegate

Young Worker – 1 delegate

(A young worker is defined as a person age 30 or under.)

25.1.1 If there are extra credentials available over and above the 15 referenced in 25.1, additional and/or alternate delegates will be elected at large by the membership upon the moving and passing of a notice of motion in compliance with these bylaws.

25.1.2 Eligibility to stand as a CUPE 15 delegate will be attendance at a minimum of 50% of the General Membership meetings in the 12 months prior to the convention. **If there is no nomination for a member who has attended a minimum of 50% of General Membership meetings in the 12 months prior to convention for any of the categories listed in 25.1 above, a member who has less than 50% attendance at the General Membership meetings will be allowed to stand as a CUPE 15 delegate for that category.**

Rationale from the Mover:

Certain categories of delegate, such as the Young Worker delegate, often go unfilled. Allowing members to stand as a delegate without the minimum meeting requirement ensures that all the different sectors of the local are represented at convention. It also ensures that a Young Worker is able to attend, which adds to the diversity of the group that is sent to convention. In addition, this may allow members who have not attended convention before to be further exposed to the labour movement and become more engaged with the local/CUPE. It also means that members who are not able to attend the General Membership meeting on a regular basis may still have the ability to participate in conventions.

The Executive recommends defeat of this motion because:

Currently, delegate seats that are not filled as per Article 25.1 are put to a Member-at Large election. Members who attend meetings should have the opportunity to be elected in the Member at Large elections before a member who does not attend meetings is elected. Conventions are up to a week in duration (and often out of town), so delegates get this time off with pay and the Executive believes that an active member should have the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way.

3. Survey - General Membership Meetings Time and Format

The Executive recommends approval of the following motion:

It was moved by Sophie Bennett to survey all members to inquire about their preferred time and day for the General Membership meeting to take place. The local will also ask the members what is their preferred format (e.g., in-person, online, or hybrid) for the meetings. Based on the results of the survey, the time and format of the General Membership meeting will be adjusted. The local will consider creative solutions for more membership attendance, based on survey results. The local will also consider holding the meetings at different times in different months if this allows for increased participation at the General Membership meetings by the members. The results of the survey will be shared with the membership and the new meeting time/format will be decided no later than March 31, 2026. The local will consider creative solutions for more membership attendance, based on survey results.

Rationale from the Mover:

During the Executive site visits in Spring 2024, several members raised that they were unable to attend the General Membership meeting as they are working when it is held. This was brought forward to the Executive, and it was decided that the membership would be surveyed regarding the timing of the General Membership meetings, but the survey has not yet taken place. In addition, the number of members at General Membership meetings is typically quite low. Adjusting the meeting time to meet the needs of the membership will allow more members to participate in the meetings, which will ultimately lead to increased member engagement in the local.

4. President Activity Report

The Executive recommends defeat of the following motion:

It was moved by Sophie Bennett that the President shall submit a monthly activity report to the members of the local.

Rationale from the Mover:

As the President is in a position paid for by the membership, a clear record of the President's activities provides the membership with transparency and accountability. This also gives the membership a greater understanding of the President's role, and gives members the ability to ask questions about specific activities, ultimately leading to increased member engagement and understanding of union initiatives.

The Executive recommends defeat of this motion because:

This activity would require expending significant time that could be better spent elsewhere because the President already provides an article in each issue of the Members' Voice as well as verbal reports at every Executive Board and General Membership meeting.

Society

1. 2026 Proposed Budget

The Executive recommends approval of the proposed 2026 VMECW Society Budget.

2. 2026 Proposed Capital Budget

The Executive recommends approval of the proposed 2026 VMECW Society Capital Budget.

OH&S CORNER



By Henry Lee, Chair – CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee

AS A WORKER, YOU HAVE RIGHTS RELATED TO A HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE AND THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIVITIES. YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE UNSAFE WORK.

If your supervisor or employer asks you to perform a work process or use a tool or equipment, and you have a good reason to believe that doing the work might create an undue hazard to your own health and safety or the health and safety of any person, you must refuse this work. This is both your right and your responsibility.

Before you exercise your right to refuse, be sure you have followed other procedures for reporting hazards and resolving workplace problems, such as talking to your supervisor. If those other hazard reporting processes have not resolved the problem(s) and you still believe that the work presents an undue hazard, exercise your right to refuse.

If you are following the refusal of unsafe work process, there are steps that you, and your supervisor or employer must take.

STEP 1

WORKER:

Immediately stop the unsafe work and report the unsafe condition (the work task, tool, or equipment) to your supervisor or employer.

SUPERVISOR OR EMPLOYER:

Your supervisor or employer investigates the matter and fixes it if possible. If they do not agree that the condition is unsafe, they report back to you.

If you and your supervisor or employer cannot agree on how to resolve the matter, **move to step 2**.

If your supervisor or employer believes the work can safely be done by another worker until the matter is resolved, they must not ask or permit another worker to do the work unless they inform the other worker(s) in writing about:

- The refusal and the reported unsafe condition
- Reason why the task would not create an undue hazard
- The workers' right to refuse the work

STEP 2

If the matter is not resolved at step 1, you and your supervisor or employer investigate the matter in the presence of one of the following:

- A worker representative of the joint health and safety committee, or a worker health and safety representative
- A worker selected by your union
- Any other worker chosen by you, the worker who reported the unsafe condition

If you, your supervisor or employer, and worker representative do not agree on how to correct the unsafe condition, **move to step 3**.

STEP 3

If the matter is not resolved following steps 1 and 2, both you and your supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC. A prevention officer will investigate the issue and take any necessary action.

Call 604-276-3100 or toll-free 1-888-621-7233.

Your supervisor or employer must not discipline or penalize you for following these steps. You may be reassigned temporarily to other work tasks while the unsafe condition is being investigated and resolved.

Visit worksafabc.com/refusing-unsafe-work for more information. This information is from the WorkSafe BC website.

Amended CUPE Local 15 Bylaws

The revised CUPE Local 15 bylaws passed at the October 22, 2025 General Membership meeting are printed below. In accordance with the CUPE National Constitution, the amendments have been approved by the CUPE National President. For specific details on the amendments, please see the October 2025 issue of the Members' Voice.

1. 11.1.1 – Officers and Trustees

The Officers of CUPE Local 15 will be the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, three Trustees and 11 Executive Members at Large. The Members at Large shall be from the following sectors (defined as bargaining units or groupings of bargaining units):

City – 2
Parks – including Ray-Cam, Britannia, WECCA – 2
K-12 – 2
Colleges and University – one each from University (Emily Carr) and College (Langara -including LSU, SUCV and Chartwells) – 2
Cultural – including Museums, VAG, Planetarium – 1
Health – one each from Community and Paramedical Subsectors – 2

2. 11.7.1 – Terms of Employment and Benefits of Full-Time Elected Positions

The 1st or 2nd Vice President will cover the President and Secretary-Treasurer's vacation. The President and Secretary-Treasurer will make every reasonable effort to coordinate their vacation to ensure they are not on vacation at the same time, and that one of them is available for contact with membership.

3. 17.4.3.1 – Lead Shop Steward Roles and Responsibilities

The Lead Shop Steward shall provide support to shop stewards in their sector by:

- Assigning stewards to members seeking assistance from the union, including for investigative meetings, discipline meetings, and grievance meetings with the employer, with the assistance of the Office Assistants or when necessary the Secretary-Treasurer.
- Preparing, maintaining, and administering a schedule of duty stewards where required.
- Attending meetings with the employer or member when needed or if no steward is available.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST WINNERS!

We're thrilled to celebrate the incredible creativity and talent shown in this year's Pumpkin Carving Contest! Each entry showcased amazing skill, imagination, and festive spirit, making it a tough decision for our judges. From spooky and spine-chilling designs to funny and heartwarming creations, everyone truly brought their Halloween A-game.

A special congratulations to our top winners — your pumpkins stole the show! Your attention to detail, originality, and artistry captured the essence of the season perfectly. Thank you to all who participated and helped make this year's contest such a fun and memorable event. We can't wait to see what you all come up with next year!

**DUE TO THE INCREIBLE
POPULARITY OF THIS CONTEST,
WE REGRET THAT WE CAN ONLY
PUBLISH THE PHOTOS OF
CATEGORY WINNERS!**



SIENNA



JASMINE



FUNNIEST
CARVED



ATTICUS



KAYA



EMMA



MASON



NAYA



NICOLE



ANEZ



Award: MOST UNUSUAL CARVED

AYAAN

Award: MOST UNUSUAL DECORATED

JAZBEE

Award: SCARIEST PAINTED

EVANDER

Award: SCARIEST CARVED

SAHIB

AVERY

ELOISE & AIDEN

LEXIE

AZARIA

JACK

THEODORE & ZANDER



COBEE



DANIEL



NADIA



HADRIAN



BROOKLYN



MIKAELA



STELLA



KAI



LEIA



KEIRA

NOVEMBER
2025

NATIONAL CONVENTION

THE MEMBERS'
voice



CUPE NATIONAL CONVENTION

TORONTO 2025

CUPE-SCFP

What a week! CUPE National Convention Toronto 2025

Delegates fully engaged in union democracy and closed convention by adopting resolutions against Section 107 of the Canada Labour Code, in solidarity with CUPW, as well as approving our Strategic Directions for 2025–2027.

“CUPE’s strength has always come from our members, the people who show up day after day to support each other, organize their workplaces, and fight for fairness,” said National President Mark Hancock. “It’s their dedication, courage, and solidarity that make our union what it is. Every conversation, every action, and every victory remind us that when workers stand together, we can achieve incredible things.”

“As we look ahead, our work is guided by a vision of opportunity for every worker,” added National Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick. “CUPE is more than a union. It’s a community where everyone’s voice matters, where learning and growth are valued, and where together we build a fairer future.”



2025 CHILDREN'S WINTER CELEBRATION

We are excited to announce that the 2025 Children's Winter Celebration will take place at VanDusen Gardens during the Festival of Lights! This is a wonderful opportunity to create joyful memories with your family while enjoying hot chocolate, snacks, and the festive lights.

Please watch for an upcoming email if you would like to attend. We regret that we can only offer a maximum of two adult and two children's tickets per member. Additional tickets can be purchased at the venue.

Tickets are limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Details on how tickets can be reserved and distributed will be shared in a later communication.

If you are not currently receiving email communications from the union office, please email us at cupe15.org with your personal email address.

Deadline: Ticket requests must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2025.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

ENTRY BETWEEN 4:00 P.M.
AND 4:30 P.M.

at VanDusen Gardens

Once inside, enjoy the celebration for as long as you like!



Winter Market in Vanier Park! Join in the Fun on December 7th

The Museum of Vancouver, the HR MacMillan Space Centre, the Vancouver Maritime Museum, and Bard on the Beach are teaming up to bring a Winter Market to Vanier Park on Sunday, December 7, 2025.

This joint venture will be a day filled with local vendors, cozy food and drink, and family-fun entertainment that will warm your heart. The three CUPE15 member organizations are offering admission by donation, and you can visit the market itself for free!

Local artisans and makers will have booths at the Maritime Museum as well as the Museum of Vancouver/Space Centre lobby, making this a great way to kickstart your holiday shopping. Plus, Bard on the Beach will be bringing along a trunk of costumes for you to try on and take photos!

There'll also be food trucks and family friendly entertainment throughout the day—including a performance from Vanier Park neighbours, the Vancouver Academy of Music.

Vendors and performers will be announced on museumofvancouver.ca/winter-market-at-vanier-park as they confirm.

Whether you're hunting for the perfect handmade gift or simply looking to soak up some winter magic, Vanier Park's Winter Market is the place to be.

VANIER PARK PRESENTS

WINTER MARKET

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH 11AM-5PM

VANIER PARK, 1100 CHESTNUT ST, VANCOUVER, V6J 3J9 &
1905 OGDEN AVE, VANCOUVER, BC V6J 1A3

FAMILY FUN / FOOD TRUCKS / LOCAL ARTISTS & CRAFTERS

MOV museum of vancouver **bard** ON THE BEACH **VANCOUVER MARITIME MUSEUM** **HR MACMILLAN SPACE CENTRE**



CUPE Local 15 welcomes submissions and photos from members.

The Members' Voice is published nine times a year for members of CUPE Local 15 - Vancouver Municipal, Education and Community Workers. The deadline for submissions is 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. All submissions may be edited for brevity and clarity. Signed articles and letters do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of CUPE Local 15.

CUPE Local 15

545 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1K9
Phone: 604-879-4671
Fax: 604-879-7582
Email: email@cupe15.org
Web: www.cupe15.org

Local 15 is a chartered affiliate of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is also affiliated with the CUPE British Columbia Division, CUPE Metro District Council, the Vancouver & District Labour Council, and the BC Federation of Labour. CUPE 15 is a member of the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM).

CUPE Local 15 Executive

Board Table Officers:

President: Warren Williams
Interim Secretary-Treasurer: Cynthia Schadt
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo
2nd Vice President: Henry Lee

Sector Representatives:

City: Aaron Cook, Susy McKay
College/University: Sophie Bennett (Langara College)
Mark Somo (Emily Carr University)
Cultural: Anna Bondartchouk
Health/HSSCBA: Edith Hole
Health/HSPBA: Lucia Rincon
Parks: Bernie Dionne, Starla Bayley
K-12: Vanessa Mani, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Steve Anderson, Sheri Nielsen, Ravina Lal

Staff Representatives:

Kathie Currie, John Geppert, Steve Salsman, Gail Johnson, Joy Tullos,

Office & Administrative Staff:

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant
Mei Wu, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Manager
Michelle Yim, Office Assistant
Geneviève Dubuc, Office Assistant
Justin Wong, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Rachna Singh, Dan Todd

LETTERS

Unions are political bodies and as such, become safe spaces to have open and healthy debate of differing opinions and ideas. The great thing about debate is the varying ideas and perspectives that allows us, as a local, to look at our blind spots. By no means do I believe that I am the be all and end all of what is right or what is wrong—but I do believe the thoughts and ideas that I bring up are valid—not just to myself, but to the local as a whole and I believe that we need to discuss these as a group and decide, as a group, if there is any merit in these thoughts and what actions need to happen to move forward.

At the last general membership meeting I was not on the winning side of the vote for many items. I don't take it personally. I appreciate the discussions and felt there were some good perspectives and suggestions to come back with. Many people, who attended the meeting, did support my ideas, but not the two thirds required to change our bylaws. This just means there is more work to be done and perhaps some small tweaks to begin to make meaningful changes to some of our processes. You will see more on that in the new year. I believe you may even see other people putting forward similar motions with these small changes, as I know, I am not the only one who sees the need for change.

For now, though, I believe we have a more pressing matter for our City and Parks members. People are concerned about their job security and what that could be like with the City's "zero means zero" budget. I have been fielding many questions about what happens if—and honestly, those are fair questions to ask. Those of you who were around in 2012 may remember we went through an exercise called a "Service Review", which was quite similar to this new budget that has been put forward. The union worked very hard to ensure our members were well looked after and for the most part, landed on their feet. We have great staff representatives who understand the language and the process that is outlined in our collective agreement should the employer look to make cuts to our jobs.

If you are looking for information on what rights you have, should you find yourself in a position of being laid off, the information is found at the back of our collective agreement with a Letter of Understanding called Layoff and Recall. This document explains the concept of bumping (this is where your seniority comes into play) and the practice of recall along with what provisions are available if you choose to have your rights bought out (a buyout).

In short: When being laid off, the first thing the employer needs to do is review any current vacancies within your classification or paygrade to see if you can and should be placed in that vacancy. Placement in a vacancy is a discretionary decision of the employer. If you are not placed into a vacancy at your paygrade, bumping at (or below) your paygrade; layoff with recall rights; or a buyout, become your options.

Bumping allows you to remain employed by requiring the employer to give layoff notice to a junior worker who occupies a position at or below your paygrade which position you have the required knowledge, skills and abilities to do the job. Although the bumping process is intended to affect the most junior workers wherever possible, this exercise can at times create a bit of a domino effect and can be disruptive to the workplace—however any disrupt is a normal and expected consequence of the employer's decision to reduce the workforce while also fulfilling their existing contractual obligation to respect their workers' seniority rights wherever possible.

Another option available to members is for recall to vacant positions that are posted after layoff. Recall enables workers to initially "accept" the layoff and, rather than bumping junior workers, choose to wait until a job is posted and then apply to come back. You have a year (12 months) to do this. Recalled workers have first priority for a job posting that they meet the minimum requirements. This option requires the worker to be proactive in looking at the jobs that are available, making the application and ensuring their application highlights that they have the minimum requirements for the work. However, the key caveat is that there is no guarantee any suitable jobs will be posted during the 12-month recall period. Layoffs are often accompanied by a hiring freeze.

Should a worker be successful in securing a temporary full time job through the recall process, this resets the 12-month clock should the TFT role be terminated.

The final option is a buyout of your recall rights. With this option the employer will pay workers two weeks of wages plus one additional week for each additional completed year of service to a maximum of 18 weeks. Taking this option extinguishes your seniority, strips you of internal bidding rights for posted vacancies and should you successfully reapply to a job with the City, you will be a new hire starting with zero seniority or years of service towards vacation entitlement.

As always, if you have questions, concerns or comments, please reach out. I will always do my best to answer and if I don't have the answer, I will let you know and work towards finding the information that you seek.

If you would like to read the full language in our collective agreement it can be found on the local's website:

Vancouver Park Board Collective Agreement 2023-2024 (digital page 117):
<https://cupe15.org/worksites/vanparkboard/>

City of Vancouver Collective Agreement 2023-2024

(digital page 126): <https://cupe15.org/worksites/city-of-vancouver/>

As always, in solidarity,
Starla Bayley