

Nunavut Employees Union Government of Nunavut Bargaining Update #9 November 2021

Despite many challenges such as COVID-19 and bargaining with an employer who clearly has not been committed to Bargaining in Good Faith, your Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) North/Nunavut Employees Union (NEU) Bargaining Team has been moving ahead.

As we start the next steps in the Collective Bargaining process, we thought it best to provide you with a brief recap of how we are more than three years into the process of reaching a fair Collective Agreement for ALL NEU Members working for the Government of Nunavut (GN):

- In [October 2019](#), just days before the parties were to meet in NEU initiated mediation after reaching impasse in Bargaining, the GN informed the NEU of a \$17 million dollar error in the calculation in their previous offer of \$33 million for the Nunavut Northern Allowance (NNA). This was clearly Bad Faith Bargaining;
- On [November 18, 2019 the NEU filed a Statement of Claim in the Nunavut Court of Justice](#) asserting that the GN had engaged in Bad Faith Bargaining (due to COVID-19 related court backlogs this case has still not been heard);
- [The NEU initiated and held “without prejudice” discussions](#) with the GN in June 2020. Despite the NEU’s willingness to negotiate on the main outstanding issues, (salaries, the NNA and paid Domestic Violence Leave) after two days, it became clear that the GN had no intention of working in any meaningful way to resolve these issues;
- [In April of 2021](#), the NEU offered to refer all outstanding issues to Arbitration for resolution by a neutral third party. This was the NEU’s in response to a “without prejudice” offer from the GN. The GN rejected our offer; then
- [In September 2021](#), documents obtained through an NEU notice of motion filed with the Nunavut Court of Justice as part of the Union’s ongoing Bad Faith Bargaining Claim revealed the GN’s intentional attempt to leverage their incompetence at the bargaining table. The GN had known about the \$17 million dollar calculation error for four months, but notified the NEU just days before mediation. In the legal and moral sense, this is the definition of Bad Faith Bargaining.

That is a quick overview of how we ended up here. The next question is **where do we go from here?**

A strike is and should always be a last resort because of the impact it can have on everyone. The NEU and PSAC care about our Members and all those that call Nunavut home. During the height of COVID-19, it would have been next to impossible to roll out mobilization/strike vote meetings due to travel risks and community and Territorial-based public health restrictions. Plus, NEU Members were on the front-line of the battle to keep Nunavut safe from COVID-19, and we had no intention to make things worse.

But COVID-19 restrictions are lifting and recent proof of the GN’s underhanded approach to Bargaining make it clear that we aren’t going to get a fair deal unless we up the pressure on the GN by:

- **Demanding** that newly elected/returning Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) work to get the GN back to the table. We will be asking for your support in this undertaking and will share the details of this campaign shortly after the incoming MLAs take their oath of office;
- **Continuing efforts** to get the GN back to the table with a fair offer. [Newly elected NEU President Jason Rochon](#) has already [publicly offered to drop the Bad Faith Bargaining Claim if the GN is willing to come to the table with a fair offer;](#)
- **Mobilizing for action.** Mobilization plans are being prepared as we write this update, including plans to ask NEU Members for a strike mandate; and
- **Asking Members** like you to get involved in any campaign or mobilization action.

We are your Bargaining Team, but this is your Union and your future, so please get involved at any level you can as we up the pressure on the GN to reach a fair deal for you.

In solidarity, Your PSAC-North/NEU Bargaining Team: Noel Collins, Simon Doiron, Linda Hunter, Ruth Kaluraq, Abe Qammaniq, Rick Roberts, Jason Rochon (NEU President), Darren Pacione (PSAC Researcher), and John Eustace (PSAC Negotiator)