

Nunavut Employees Union Iqaluit Housing Authority Bargaining Update July 2023



MEDIATION – WHAT IS NEEDED TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AFTER 123 DAYS ON THE PICKET LINE

The Nunavut Employees Union (NEU)/Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) North Bargaining Team will meet the Iqaluit Housing Authority (IHA) representative in a mediation session on Friday, July 21, 2023, in Ottawa. This is the first time the parties are meeting in person since the strike started on March 17.

The Union has been clear since then that the demands which triggered the strike are still on the table: wage increases that keep up with inflation, no decreases to the northern allowances and the removal of concessions that would make work more precarious for IHA employees. The Union demands are fair and reasonable. After 123 days on the picket line, a deal will only be possible if the employer comes to mediation with a real willingness to address the outstanding issues with funds, humanity and no excuses.

It is not unreasonable to ask for 2.5 percent for 2022 retroactively, considering high inflation across Canada and in Nunavut continues. It is also not unreasonable to ask the employer to remove concessions that would strip rights from term and casual workers or to ask for no reductions to current allowances. Nor is it unreasonable to ask the employer to genuinely commit to reconciliation and to not include language that would limit future entitlements to bilingual bonuses for workers who speak English or French in addition to Inuktitut - especially when Inuktitut is their first language, and they deal with Inuktitut-speaking tenants every day. Furthermore, it is fair to reject language that seeks to automatically deduct rent from some workers' pay as if they are incapable of managing their own lives. It is also fair to reject concessions on the table that harm the existing working conditions of IHA employees.

What needs to be done: The Union expects the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) to provide a new mandate and the funding to settle this labour dispute. The Union is simply asking NHC and IHA to do the right thing and show that they care about workers; that they recognize the value of the local workforce, and that they care about ending this labour dispute. The Union remains committed to reaching a negotiated settlement. However, the workers remain strong in their determination not to accept an unjust agreement.

"Our members at the NEU are standing strong against concessions and PSAC North stands behind them in full support," states Josée-Anne Spirito, PSAC North Regional Executive Vice President. "Their strength is unbreakable, and we will continue to fight with them for fair wages and worker's rights. It is time for the employer to wake up, acknowledge the reality that workers at the IHA face and come to the table with a fair offer."

Public support for the IHA workers has been overwhelming and is much appreciated in this labour dispute.

"Everyone except the NHC and IHA seems to understand what is going on here," adds Jason Rochon, NEU President. "We appreciate the public shows of support and generosity and thank all those that have stopped by the line or found other ways to show support and appreciation to our members. Unions and workers from across Canada are sending in tens of thousands of dollars to show their solidarity and support of IHA workers. "

Please show your support by participating in the online email campaign calling on the NHC and IHA to do the right thing at https://psacnorth.com/nunavut-housing-corporation-must-step-up/.