



# UNION MATTERS

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*My local works  
because I participate*

Date and time of  
General Membership  
meetings are posted  
at each worksite and  
at [www.cupe1169.ca](http://www.cupe1169.ca)

**“Clients do not  
come first. Em-  
ployees come  
first. If you take  
care of your em-  
ployees, they will  
take care of the  
clients”**

~ Richard Branson~



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## You Should Know

### Collective Bargaining Rights Are Needed!

Do you know what collective bargaining is and do you know why it is important? Do you care? Since 1969 representatives of CUPE Local 1169 have sat down with representatives of The Calgary Public Library Board to engage in important discussion and debate on your rights in the workplace. The struggle to retain bargaining rights is brought into doubt by politicians who fightback against legislation that supports your rights as workers and by journalists who consistently fail to recognize that members of bargaining units are tax payers and members of our communities.

Negative judgment of unionized workplaces is often passed without explanation or understanding of the concept and purpose of collective bargaining. Sometimes, negative judgement is passed by members of bargaining units.

Let's start with the core fundamentals of collective bargaining. The basics involve representatives of a unified group of employees entrusted to negotiate rates of pay, benefits, and working conditions. It is understood that when united in purpose employees have more clout or power when bargaining as a collective than as an individual employee attempting to negotiate one-on-one with their employer. Collective bargaining is part of a democratic process which allows employees to vote on whether or not to accept a negotiated contract.

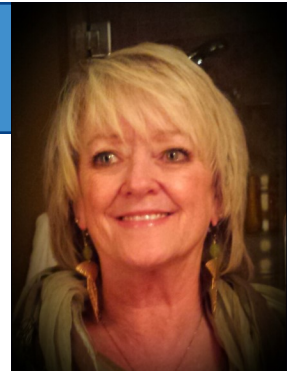
On your behalf, what does your negotiations committee bargain for? To name a few issues, the committee bargains for fair wages and benefits,

guaranteed protection against bullying and harassment, hours of work, and processes for career advancement that must recog-

nize educational standards, worksite experience, and seniority. Most importantly, a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) holds the employer accountable to enforce the CBA as a “fair and consistent” application of a legally binding contract.

Now, let's ask ourselves is collective bargaining a fundamental human right or does it give your union the legal authority to initiate change and work on solutions with your employer? The answer is yes to both. Your union firmly believes that collective bargaining is beneficial to our economy and supports a just society. Moreover, it enshrines pride in employees through empowerment.

Article 23(4) of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted back in 1948, asserts clearly that “everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.” Similarly, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the United Nations Agency, which is responsible for crafting and overseeing international labour standards, puts forward in its Constitution and Declaration of Principles that the freedoms to associate and to bargain collectively are fundamental rights. Canada and Alberta are respectful in honouring the right of elected union officers to collectively bargain for both private and public-sector employees.



In Canada, collective bargaining was empowered with the Rand Formula in 1946. The Rand Formula guarantees unions the financial resources needed to look out for the best interests of employees. The Rand Formula delivered an important message, that of, "a union is essential for the betterment of all workers."

Your union is currently in the process of negotiating a new CBA with The Board. It is in the interests of both The Board and your union to negotiate in good faith to achieve a mutually beneficial agreement. As a member, you have the right to be heard and hold accountable your elected leaders. You have a say in all actions undertaken by your union.

Are unions still important? Absolutely and without question! Without union representation there would be no established practice for the collective bargaining process and without a guarantee of decent wages and working conditions, the impact on our workplaces, and by reflection our society, would be bleak. The potential for a spike in poverty and workplace accidents would likely rise and the availability of quality jobs would diminish.

With an increase trend in large businesses, including major Canadian banks, sending well-paying jobs offshore and thus eliminating both current and future jobs for our citizens, it is critical that your jobs be secured.

The growing trend of precarious work robs new workers of the hope of planning for a future.

University graduates employed by the CPL struggle for many years to find financial freedom from student loans and/or qualifying for mortgages as they are unable to secure full-time employment. The significant number of precarious jobs deemed necessary by The Board, in fact saves money. No pensions or benefits for precarious workers! Too bad for you...let's extend hours and alter full-time jobs to part-time...ouch!

Your union has received a strong message regarding what is important in this round of negotiations. **You want access to a pension plan, improved wages and increased opportunities for advancement in the workplace. You want more full-time opportunities.** It will be increasingly important that you show your support of your negotiating committee by sending a message to The Board that being told you are the CPL's most important asset is no longer enough.

A vision for the future of the CPL has been carefully crafted and communicated to the citizens of Calgary. Where is the service design that highlights the workers who ensure the vision is delivered? The excellent contributions and dedication of you, the employees, are what makes the CPL a world class library. It is not just bricks and mortar, but human engagement that defines the services provided by you, the worker.

*In solidarity,  
Rh'ena Oake, President CUPE Local 1169  
Calgary and Cochrane Public Library Workers*

## Contract Corner: know your rights under the collective agreement



### 15.04 Sick Leave

The purpose of the sick leave benefit as described in Clause 15.04 is to provide a defined benefit to a full-time employee who, by reason of sickness or disability, which is not WCB compensable, is unable to perform the duties of their job.

#### What does this mean?

This article refers to sick leave accumulated

by full-time staff. Part-time and substitute staff receive a payout in lieu of sick leave. Full-time staff accrue sick leave based on the number of hours worked as shown on your pay stubs. This clause does not cover an injury or illness sustained at work and covered by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). If injured at work, it is vital that you complete a First Aid Form as a record of the injury. If you have any questions, please contact your Union.

*Respectfully submitted by Terrill Budd, Chief Steward*



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