

the PS/GE

# bargaining

report

MARCH 2023

“Our standpoint is clear around bargaining ...

**Our top priority  
is our members.”**



**3** Negotiating  
Committee

**4** Bargaining  
Underway

**9** Essential  
Services

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Message from Your Negotiating Committee
- 4 Bargaining is Underway: What is at the Table?
- 7 Health and Dental Plan Proposals
- 8 PS/GE Crossword
- 9 Ministry of Social Services Report
- 9 Essential Services

- 10 Events
- 11 Panel Representative Training
- 12 Golf Tournament

### On the Cover

Your Negotiating Committee at the bargaining table with the employer in January 2023

### Keep in touch

If your contact information has changed, please let us know so we can keep you up to date on important union issues. Send an email to [mis@sgeu.org](mailto:mis@sgeu.org) with your updated information, including:

- Home mailing address
- Home phone number
- Personal cell phone number
- Personal email address
- Any other important contact information

**Going paperless?** If you prefer to receive future copies of this publication via email, please let us know by contacting us at [mis@sgeu.org](mailto:mis@sgeu.org).

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# Message from Your Negotiating Committee

## Hello members,

Our contract expired in September 2022. We have been preparing for more than six months with our best efforts to negotiate for better economic and social well-being for our members. We are ready for negotiations. We are firm on our priorities as mandated by the membership proposals we received to ensure better working conditions for the tenure of the contract.

Our negotiations may be challenging because of the pandemic and several of its impacts. Your strength and support will be more important than ever.

The importance of public service and government employees' work is undeniable, and it was recognized more during the pandemic. However, the government (our employer) should acknowledge this at the table by implementing higher standards of living wages for employees.

Our standpoint is clear around bargaining. Our top priority is our members. We acknowledge that the bargaining process is going to involve building trust. However, progress rests on the employer's offers of better wages and benefits for workers in government services in Saskatchewan.

We believe in sustainable, collaborative union-management relations and the negotiation of collective agreements that place greater emphasis on problem-solving and resolving workplace issues at all organizational levels.

A new collective agreement at the table will be ultimately decided by our membership through the ratification process. So, please stay up to date by reading the reports, and feel free to send your questions and concerns to us at [DBharadwaj@sgeu.org](mailto:DBharadwaj@sgeu.org) or [mamor@sgeu.org](mailto:mamor@sgeu.org).

We hope we all will stand in solidarity to reach a fair agreement with the Government of Saskatchewan.

In solidarity,  
PSGE Negotiating Committee



*Lori Bossaer  
Chair of PS/GE  
Negotiating  
Committee*



*Corey McCafferty  
1st Vice Chair, and  
Chair of Human  
Service Component*



*Justin Priel  
2nd Vice Chair, and  
Chair of Trade  
and Technical  
Component*



*Robert Cossette  
Chair of Admin and  
Communications  
Component*



*Mac Trost  
Chair of Legal,  
Inspection, and  
Regulatory  
Component*



*George McLeod  
Chair of Vehicle,  
Equipment,  
and Operation  
Component*



*Jackie Krasko  
Chair of  
Support Services  
Component*

# Bargaining is Underway

## What is at the Table?

Your Public Service / Government Employment (PS/GE) Negotiating Committee has begun bargaining with the employer (Government of Saskatchewan) for a new collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

On January 10, 2023, the parties met to exchange proposal packages. Bargaining sessions are scheduled for February, March and April 2023.

The employer has proposed that they would like to have a discussion regarding the simplification and standardization of how designated holidays are compensated, permanent part-time availability in correctional facilities, and Letter of Understanding 98-5 on leave for union business.

The following is an overview of the employer's bargaining proposals.

### Classification

There are a few proposals on classification including those forwarded by the Joint Maintenance Committee (Note: the Joint Maintenance Committee is a union-management committee that deals with classification). The proposals include changes to a few provisions on the Letter of Understanding 98-12 Maintenance of the Classification Plan. They had proposed a few changes to Article 5 on classification.

### Staffing

There are a few proposals for staffing.

1. **Merit-based staffing:** On merit-based staffing, the employer is proposing merit hiring for levels 7 through 14.
2. **Permanent part-time re-employment list:** The employer is proposing that refusal of a second offer of employment will result in the employee's name being removed from the seniority unit re-employment list.
3. **New assessment for staffing:** The employer has proposed to amend staffing language to include more generic terminology reflecting

qualifications, in their anticipation of moving to the capability model. The Negotiating Committee has a few concerns related to how this change will impact the current SGEU competency profile or related assessment factors. All the core competencies in the CBA will be replaced with “qualification”. This proposed replacement affects Article 6 staffing, qualifying for positions, eligibility list, nature of examination and panels, permanent full-time and part-time staffing, appointments, pay administration and training rates.

4. **Panel representative:** The employer is proposing to remove union representation on staffing panels. Our union considers it a significant removal of the union’s rights and strongly believes that it is detrimental to the fair recruitment process. This affects Articles 6.2.9.5 A, 6.2.9.6 A, 6.2.9.7 A, 6.2.11 A, 6.3.2.1 A, 6.3.3.1 A, 8.1.2.2 A&B.
5. **Employer has proposed new language on staffing:** They have proposed that in the event of the creation of subsequent vacancies within a reasonable timeframe, they might refer to a competition that is currently in progress or was previously completed, for assessment and appointment of another candidate.
6. **Term staffing:** The employer has proposed changing the posting requirement for the term position from nine months to 12 months. The current collective agreement requires all jobs above nine months to be posted.
7. **Employer has proposed to change the posting requirement for labour service.** Currently, the CBA mandates labour service vacancies to be posted for a minimum of 14 calendar days. The employer is proposing to reduce to a minimum of three business days for all competitions except merit-based and seven calendar days for all merit-based competitions.

## Seniority

The employer has proposed significant changes to seniority provisions in the collective agreement. The rationale for these proposals is to simplify the administration of seniority.

1. Employer has proposed to remove the tiebreaker when two or more employees have the same bargaining unit seniority. They have proposed using the social insurance numbers with employees, with the lowest six social insurance numbers being considered the senior.
2. Employer has proposed to remove the different services for establishing the seniority date, including the following time worked: regular hours, Active Canadian War Services, strike time, paid time not worked for the designated holiday, time spent on worker’s compensation, long-term disability and adjudicated third party insurance claims, definite leave of absence, instructional family employees and employees with modified hours of work.

The employer’s rationale for changes to seniority provision is that once the seniority date is established, it does not change. Therefore, all we need is how to establish the original seniority and when it ends.

3. Employer is proposing to remove seniority appeal provision in CBA (Remove Article 8.2.1.1 in entirety).

## Pay Administration

The employer is proposing to remove the subsequent review. The employer’s rationale is if an employee successfully negotiates a salary above the minimum, all other people should not reap the benefits of that. Their argument is this is impacting some candidates negatively as now pay above the minimum is not given as frequently.

## Hours of Work

1. **Special Earned Day Off (EDO) provisions:** The employer is proposing to eliminate special EDO provisions for field employees and include field employees in EDO provisions for all employees under Article 9.4. The employer's rationale is that they would like to standardize EDO provisions for all employees.
2. **Time in Lieu (TIL):** The employer is proposing to reduce the maximum of 120 hours of carry-over to 90 hours.
3. **Temporary Assignment of Higher Duties (TAHD):** The employer has proposed that if an employee on TAHD has any Scheduled Day Off (SDO) not taken before returning to their home position, it will be paid out. In-scope employees are not entitled to SDOs, so if they are taking on TAHD in an out-of-scope position, they will have to use them or will be paid out before returning to their home position.

## Incidental Use

The employer has proposed a flat rate on incidental usage. They are proposing the same rate for all vehicles without categorizing them as cars or trucks. The employer's rationale is it will simplify the administration.

## Sick Leave

Currently, an employee may draw on their future sick leave credits to a maximum of 30 days. The employer is proposing to reduce this to 15 days.

## Probation

The employer has proposed increasing the probationary period for labour service employees from 104 regular working days to 208 regular working days or two calendar years, whichever comes first.

## Vacation

The employer has proposed changing a few vacation provisions. One proposal is to remove entitlement of salary advance of permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees. Currently, the CBA allows permanent full-time employees to receive salary in advance or their vacation once a year. The CBA allows permanent part-time employees to request an advance of up to an amount of earned but unused vacation credits.

## Pressing Necessity

The employer is proposing to change the credit to hours (e.g. a minimum of 75 sick leave credits to 600 sick leave hours, a pressing necessity maximum of five days to 40 hours per fiscal year). The rationale is to change the word "credit" to "hour" to make it clear and easier for employees and managers to understand.

## Letter of Understanding 09-1- Rehabilitation Placement Process

The employer has proposed a few changes to the Letter of Understanding. The employer is proposing to add a recommencement of phase 1, if a change in an employee's medical information (elimination/restrictions) alters the search parameters for a work placement.

The employer has proposed to remove the severance pay and enhanced severance from the Letter of Understanding. There is a change proposed to the salary guarantee waiting period.

The employer is proposing to remove the rehabilitation bumping provisions. The rationale from the employer is that bumping is not an option that the Government of Saskatchewan nor the union would want to resort to when placing an individual.

## Monetary Proposals

The employer has not shared a monetary proposal yet.

# Health and Dental Plan Proposals

The PS/GE Negotiating Committee received proposals from members around the health and dental plan. The committee has made referrals to the PS/GE Health Board of Trustees. The following items were sent for costing. Once we receive the costing, the discussion will be held with the Health Plan Board of Trustees.

## Health

1. Increase paramedical expenses (increased to \$400/year)
2. Coverage for TEVA-Progesterone 100 mg CAP-contraceptives
3. Coverage for Hormone Replacement Therapy
4. Coverage for EVRA Transdermal Patch
5. Coverage for Gardasil 9 Vaccine
6. Coverage for employees regardless of hours worked if medical indicates can only work less than 37.33 hours
7. Coverage for COVID testing costs
8. Increase Vision Care to \$500/per two years



9. Introduce flexible Health Options (employee option on which plan to select)
10. Coverage for full-time employees who are on maternity leave
11. Allow employees to pay premiums to cover them beyond the one-year definite leave

## Dental

1. Coverage for dental implants



## Download the Endless Savings & More App!

As a member of the PS/GE Bargaining Unit, you get savings at hundreds of businesses across Canada through our app.

To download, search for Endless Savings & More in the App Store or Google Play.

The organization code is: SGEU

If you have previously used the app with the PSGE code, please update it to SGEU in your profile on the app.

Enjoy exclusive offers from: CAT Footwear, GhostBed, Indigo.ca, RW&CO, Loblaw Optical, Lordco Auto Parts, HelloFresh, TurboTax, 1-800-GOT-JUNK? and Choice Hotels!

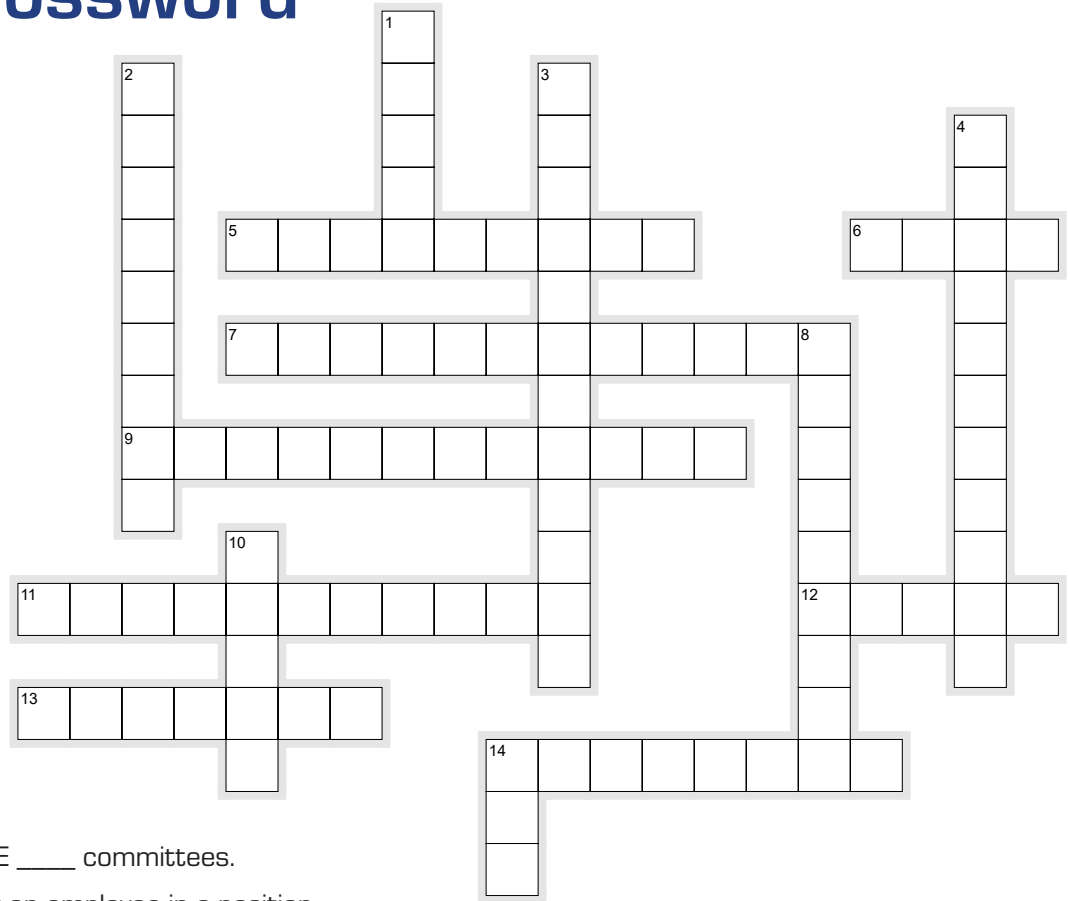
# PS/GE Crossword

Test your knowledge about SGEU, the PS/GE bargaining unit and your collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

Hint: Find a copy of your CBA online at [sgeu.org/cba](http://sgeu.org/cba).

Would you like to see more crosswords or interactive activities in future bargaining reports?

Send us an email at [comm@sgeu.org](mailto:comm@sgeu.org) to let us know!



## Across

5. There are three PS/GE \_\_\_\_ committees.
6. Type of employment for an employee in a position with a start and end date
7. Core \_\_\_\_ are the knowledge, skills and abilities, and personal attributes that are critical to effective, successful performance for a position within an occupation
9. Complete the name of this SGEU leadership development course: "Unionism on \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_" (two words)
11. First and last name of current SGEU President
12. According to PS/GE CBA, all competitions except for merit-based staffing, will be posted for minimum of \_\_\_\_ business days
13. Article number in the PS/GE CBA that covers vacation
14. Name of article in the PS/GE collective bargaining agreement that this statement belongs to: "All competitions, except merit-based staffing, will be posted for minimum of three business days"

## Down

1. The employer agrees to recognize the principle of equal pay for work of equal \_\_\_\_
2. Name of article in the PS/GE CBA that this statement belongs to: "Members of the designated diversity groups on the service-wide or agency re-employment lists shall also have access to the re-employment list for diversity staffing"
3. SGEU offices are located in Regina, Saskatoon and \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ (two words)
4. First and last name of the PS/GE Negotiating Committee Chairperson
8. Number of PS/GE locals
10. Number of people on the PS/GE Negotiation Committee
14. Number of sectors in SGEU

ACROSS: 5. GRIEVANCE; 6. TERM; 7. COMPETENCIES; 9. TURTRLE ISLAND; 11. TRACEY SAUER; 12. THREE; 13. SIXTEEN; 14. STAFFING  
 DOWN: 1. VALUE; 2. DIVERSITY; 3. PRINCE ALBERT; 4. LORI BOSSAER; 8. SEVENTEEN; 10. SEVEN; 14. SIX



# Ministry of Social Services Report

The PS/GE Negotiating Committee commissioned two sets of surveys with the Ministry of Social Services staff in 2016 and 2022. Based on the surveys and interviews, two reports were created.

Both reports highlighted difficult issues experienced regularly by our members working within the Ministry of Social Services. Key issues identified in the 2016 report were previously discussed with the ministry. Upon completion of the 2022 survey, a comparison of the two reports was completed.

The comparison showed no improvements; in fact, it showed that things have gotten worse. These findings resulted in the formation of the Social Services Ad Hoc Committee.

Since the committee's inception, we have held meetings with the Ministry's Assistant Deputy Ministers and the Public Service Commission. Although we have had these meetings, there has been nothing brought forward by the ministry addressing our concerns.

We recognize that workload challenges have existed for

many years, which is why your PS/GE representatives will continue to lobby and put pressure on the government to act on improving the stressful situation faced by staff to address and alleviate the difficulties, pressures, and frustrations you face on a daily basis. We also have concerns with the high volume of term positions being utilized by the Ministry.

We want to thank you for your dedication, hard work and commitment to your jobs and the people you serve.

Read the full reports here: [sgeu.org/public-service](https://sgeu.org/public-service).

## “Essential Services”

### SGEU's Charter Challenge of Provisions in Part VII of the *Saskatchewan Employment Act*

In 2008, the Wall Government enacted the *Public Service Essential Services Act*. This legislation allowed a public sector employer to designate certain employees as essential thus preventing them from going on strike. Moreover, the Act did not provide a meaningful alternative to the right to strike. There was no process of interest arbitration to settle the terms and conditions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement through a hearing

in front of an impartial board of arbitration.

SGEU filed a lawsuit. In the lawsuit, SGEU has filed its Statement of Claim and the Government has filed a Statement of Defense. The parties are proceeding through the formal steps of the litigation process. We expect the trial will take place in late 2023 or more likely 2024.

Read the full reports at: [sgeu.org/CharterChallenge](https://sgeu.org/CharterChallenge).



## Senior's Thanksgiving Dinner

Every year PS/GE sponsors a Thanksgiving supper for approximately 1000-1200 seniors in Regina. In addition to the volunteers pictured below, volunteers from the University of Regina's men's basketball team, the Cougars, shared their time and effort to make the October 2 supper successful. The fantastic meal was supplied by Joe's European Deli & Catering and was enjoyed by all.

During the event, Dennis and Curtis Ficor provided entertainment which had many up dancing and engaging in joyous socialization.



*Pictured above are a few of the volunteers that helped to make the 2022 Thanksgiving Dinner for the residents at the Regina Seniors Centre a huge success*

## Christmas Supper

Barry Nowoselsky, Ed Hildebrand, and Earl Cook attended the PS/GE Christmas Supper that was held in Swift Current on December 7, 2022. We missed having Terry Thompson, Tim McKay, and Denise Goskie with us as they were unable to attend. This was a great opportunity to show the retirees our gratitude for their years of service and dedication to SGEU. We wish them good health and happiness in their retirement. Their knowledge and experience will be missed.

## Farewell to Cory Hendriks

Cory Hendriks retired from SGEU in December 2022 after over 25 years of service with SGEU in different capacities as an elected official and staff representative. As a Labour Relations Officer, Cory was an asset not just for the Public Service/General Employment (PS/GE) Negotiating Committee but for SGEU as a whole and for her co-workers.

The PS/GE Negotiating Committee has always relied on Cory's support.

Cory has been hired as a Human Resource Consultant with the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan (TSask). We wish Cory all the best in her new job.

## Welcome to Marie Amor and Dipa Bharadwaj

The PS/GE is happy to have Labour Relations Officers Marie Amor and Dipa Bharadwaj on the team. Both Marie and Dipa will be supporting the PS/GE Negotiating Committee and the bargaining unit.



## Police and Peace Officers' Memorial

In September 2022, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) Correctional Officers and Youth Facility Workers Representatives met to discuss challenges and issues each of the provincial bargaining units are facing. Attending on behalf of SGEU were Mac Trost, Corey McCaffrey, Dale Coward, Angelique Hortness, Diane Beaulieu, Roger Dussealt, and Benji Hazen.

A delegation of seven Public Service members represented PS/GE at the 45th Annual

Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Service, held in Ottawa on September 23, 2022.

The march began at the Supreme Court and ended at Parliament Hill in Ottawa. This Memorial Service honours the memory of those individuals in uniform who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

We are proud to represent many members who do the difficult but vital work of protecting Saskatchewan's people, property and natural resources.

## Panel Representative Training



PS/GE offers panel representative training to members to equip them with the knowledge and skills to represent the union at the deliberations of any staffing panel assigned to them by the union. Panel representatives participate in screening, interviews and any other assessments as required.

The role of the panel representative is to observe and ensure all candidates are treated in a fair and impartial manner and to report the actions of the panel to PS/GE.

If you are interested in taking the training, contact Justin Priel at [JPriel@sgeu.org](mailto:JPriel@sgeu.org).

# SGEU PS/GE GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2023  
MELFORT GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

SHOTGUN START 11:00 A.M.  
4 HOLE-IN-ONE PRIZES  
Sponsored by RBC (Keith Pavo)



**\$150/player (includes golf cart and supper)**  
**Register with payment before May 27, 2023 by contacting**  
**George at 306.402.7141 (first 100 golfers accepted)**

**ALL PROCEEDS DONATED TO THE**  
**SASKATCHEWAN CHAPTER OF MAKE-A-WISH CANADA**

The PS/GE Bargaining Unit will be hosting the 2023 golf tournament in Melfort at the Golf & Country Club on June 3. All proceeds of the event will be donated to the Saskatchewan chapter of Make-A-Wish Canada.

The PS/GE Bargaining Unit is sponsoring six teams. Preference will be given to two teams of retirees. Teams or individuals can enter for these six spots by sending their interest to George McLeod at [gmcleod@sgeu.org](mailto:gmcleod@sgeu.org) before April 30, 2023.

Please note that sponsorship is for SGEU members and retirees only.