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Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union

NEWS RELEASE

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SGEU members ratify contract at H.E.L.P. Homes of Regina

SGEU members at H.E.L.P. Homes of Regina have approved a new collective agreement, containing a wage increase and additional benefits for approximately 45 workers. This community-based residential support organization provides services for individuals living with an intellectual disability in Regina.

“We’re pleased to have secured well-deserved wage and benefit increases for our members, who do challenging but vital and rewarding work supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our community,” said Darren Olson, chair of SGEU’s H.E.L.P. Homes of Regina bargaining committee. “Our priority is to ensure clients of H.E.L.P. Homes receive the support they need, and we commend the organization for recognizing and compensating our members for the important role they play in providing services.”

Under the new agreement, members will receive a 6.5 per cent wage increase, a signing bonus equal to 1.5 per cent of their last year’s wages, and a boost in coverage for dental care and prescription medication. This is a significant improvement for members whose wages started as low as \$13.03 per hour and who haven’t had a raise since April 2014, because no funding increases were received by the agency.

“We know that H.E.L.P. Homes received a five per cent funding increase, and they chose to dedicate the money to employee compensation,” added Olson. “This is a significant investment that will improve the organization’s ability to recruit and retain qualified and dedicated staff in order to serve our clients more effectively.”

The contract also contains a new “Emergency Shelter” clause for those experiencing interpersonal violence. It allows members to use sick time or other leave, or take unpaid leave if their paid leave has been used.

“Workers trying to escape domestic violence shouldn’t face further stress about missing work or covering their bills. This new provision in the contract will help ensure they can focus entirely on removing themselves from abusive situations,” said Olson.

The new collective agreement is in effect until March 31, 2022.

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