



Wage Equity Update #17

As you may be aware, last week the provincial government reached tentative agreements with unionized public sector workers, including those employed in the Community Living sector. Spectrum Society is one of a few agencies in this sector whose employees have chosen not to belong to a trade union. As an employer, we have worked diligently on behalf of our employees for the past 18 years to ensure equal or better wages and benefits to those earned by unionized workers. Under the previous government, Spectrum and a group of other non-union agencies successfully sued the government when they attempted to deny our employees equal wage increases to those given to unionized workers. Since 2001, our employees have actually enjoyed higher wages and better benefits than employees working for unionized agencies.

During the recent labour negotiations, we have once again been lobbying the government to maintain its commitment to wage equity. CLBC has also been advocating on our behalf, and assures us that the government is aware of the issues and supports the principle of wage equity between union and non-union workers. Spectrum's Executive Director and the President of our Board have sent a letter to the Minister of Finance urging resolution to this issue in light of the union contracts now being settled.

We encourage each of you to contact your own MLAs, or send an email or letter to the Minister of Finance supporting our efforts to maintain wage equity between union and non-union workers. Attached is a sample letter which you may use, or feel free to write your own letter (keep in mind the government isn't saying no, they just need some encouragement to nail down a firm commitment). We suggest you send any correspondence within the next week, while these negotiations are still front and centre on the government's agenda.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Ernie, Susan or Aaron at the Spectrum office: (604) 323-1433. We have added a link to the Spectrum website called "Wage Equity" which includes the attached letter and a link where you can send a direct email to any of the MLAs. Also on the Wage Equity site are copies of previous memos we distributed during the last round of labour negotiations 3-4 years ago.

We will keep you posted on any new developments as they arise.

Susan Kurliak, Director, Communications