

UNION NEWS

JUNE 2022



As I am sure you are all aware, we now have a ratified agreement with FCL. Thank you to all who were able to come out and vote. A few points of clarification on some frequently asked questions.

WAGES/INCREASES/RETROACTIVE PAY:

The wage increase for the first year is 1.5%, and it's retroactive to November 1, 2019. You have to be actively on payroll and still in scope as of May 6, 2022 to qualify for retroactive wages. I know many of you have waited far too long for this wage increase and for retro pay, and I want to thank you once again for your patience. I am asking you to be patient just a little bit longer. Implementing the new wage schedule is a huge task, and once it is done, the Union needs to review it ourselves and sign off on it. This will take some time, as it does every contract. Rest assured, you are currently earning the new wage, and it will be added to your retro pay. Payroll has asked for a possible extension calculating retro wages for everyone, and has guaranteed us that these payments will be issued by July 29 at the absolute latest.

The next increase of 1.75% will come on May 6, 2023. The next (2%) on May 6, 2024. The next (1.5%) on May 6, 2025. The final pay increase of this agreement (1.5%) will come into effect on May 6, 2026.

CONTRACT BOOKLET:

Some have asked why we do not have a contract booklet yet. There were a great many language changes to the agreement, and re-writing it will take some time. Both sides must sign off on every single change to every article. We are working on getting the new booklets printed as soon as we can, but it's important to get everything correct.

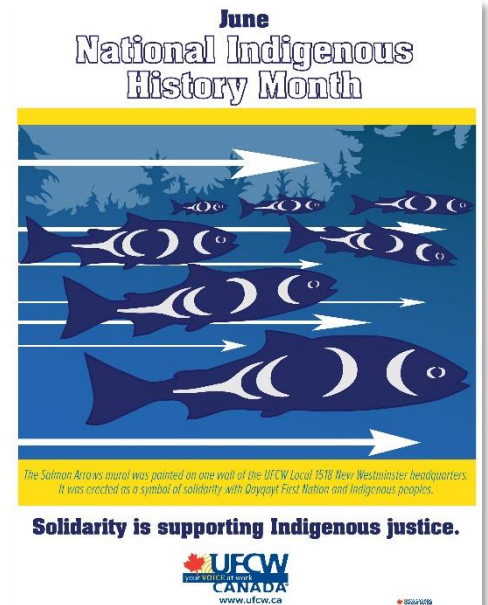
FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT:

The \$750 Flexible Spending Account goes into effect on January 1, 2023. The Flexible Spending Account is a benefit for employees where they will receive a fixed amount each year to allocate to health and wellness expenses. Employees can customize their Flexible Spending Accounts to their individual needs. The flexible spending account is broken into two types: a Personal Spending Account (PSA) and Health Care Spending Account (HCSA).

1) A Health Care Spending Account is a non-taxable benefit that can be utilized for eligible health and dental expenses that are traditionally not covered by your current benefits (subject to Canada Revenue Agency guidelines). Additionally, once plan maximums are reached you can utilize the funds in this account to offset your out-of-pocket expenses. Some examples include eyewear, Lasik eye surgery, or massage therapy.

2) A Personal Spending Account is a taxable benefit that can be utilized for personal well-being related expenses not traditionally covered such as: education, commuting, or gym/sports memberships.

If you have family coverage, your dependents expenses will also be eligible.



MATERNITY, PARENTAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE TOP-UP:

Employees who take maternity, adoption or parental leave are eligible to receive a top-up benefit of their base salary up to 100% for up to 8 weeks. This is in effect as of May 6, so you have to have started your leave on or after that date to be eligible. Speak to your HR advisor in order to access this benefit.

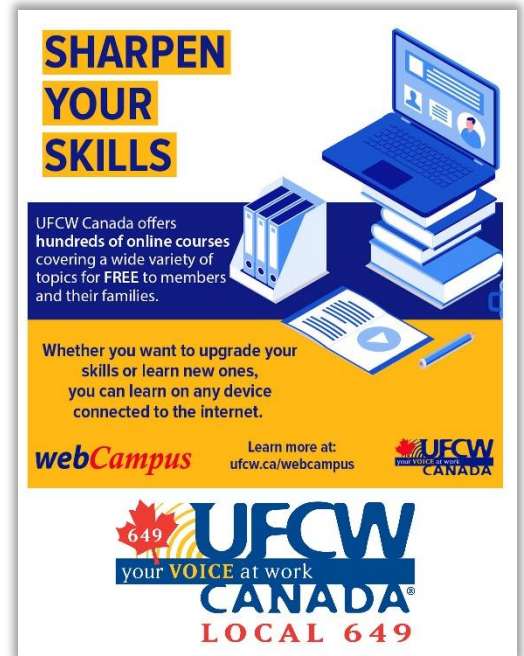
SHORT TERM DISABILITY:

We now have a short-term disability plan. I will attempt to explain how it works.

If you currently have less than 15 sick days in your “bank”, you will continue to earn sick credits as per the CBA until you reach 15 days. You cannot “bank” more than 15 days. After 7 consecutive days away from work, you will have to apply for short-term disability through your HR advisor and will be moved over to short-term disability through The Co-operators. Once on short-term, your wage will be paid out at 75%. When you are back to work, you will continue to earn sick time credits as per the CBA until you are back up to 15 days.

If you have more than 15 days currently in your “bank”, you will retain those days, but are no longer earning any new sick credits. You will not earn any more credits until you are below 15 days, at which point you will begin earning credits again until you max out at 15 days. You will still apply for short-term disability after 7 days, but your wage will be topped up to 100%. For every day you are topped up, you will lose a day out of your “bank”.

All premiums for short-term disability will be covered by FCL.



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OTHER NEWS:

We plan to have our first in-person General Membership Meeting in over two years on August 9, 2022 at Sutherland Hall. I hope to see you all there. We are also looking into streaming this meeting virtually, so if you haven't already, please send me your email address for a link. Additionally, if you have not provided a cell phone number, we will also be sending out links and other updates via text message.

Please send along any contact information you wish to provide or ask any follow up questions here:

Email: president@ufcw649.info

Cell: 306-292-8083

Have a great summer!

B. Palko

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President, UFCW Local 649

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