



**Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 901**

The Union of Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, Postdoctoral Scholars, and Research Assistants at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario

[www.psa901.org](http://www.psa901.org)

Monday, March 16, 2020

Dear PSAC Local 901 members,

By now, due to the coronavirus and the closure of in-person Undergraduate courses at Queen's University, many of you have likely received an email from your Department Heads about what to expect in the coming days. You should know that the University is looking into whether or not it is possible to transfer Teaching Assistantships to Research Assistantships, meaning that duties you were responsible for under your collectively agreed upon Teaching Assistant Form (TAF) would be amended to doing other work, beyond the scope of a regular TAship.

**What Queen's Teaching Assistants need to know**

1. PSAC Local 901 members need to know that ***any changes that are made to the TAF need to be mutually agreed upon***. If the new duties expected of you are not mutually agreeable, you have a right to decline this work. This is indicated in [Section 16 of the Collective Agreement](#). In short, Teaching Assistants cannot be arbitrarily switched to Research Assistants.
2. The assigned duties of a TA are clearly listed in Appendix A of the Collective Agreement. The TAF doesn't need to be signed when changes are made. Section B of the TAF can be revised on existing contracts. A new contract/additional signatures only needs to be drawn up if additional hours are required.
3. If Supervisors are asking you to do something outside of the TAF, they will have to draft a Research Assistant contract and compensate you accordingly. In any case, TAs will receive the full pay in their contract.

You are the union, and your union is here to support you during these uncertain times. If you suspect that your Department or Teaching Assistant Supervisor is violating the rules of the Collective Agreement, and you are uncomfortable with any new arrangements, please reach out to us.

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In solidarity,

Doug Yearwood

Vice President, Community Relations

On behalf of the PSAC Local 901 Executive Committee