



Public Service Alliance of Canada
Local 901

PSAC Local 901 - Unit 1 Bargaining Communique #2

Subject: The Employer's Ongoing Lack of Commitment in the Negotiation

The Employer continues to approach the table with poorly considered proposals or, worse, no counterproposals to the rich and comprehensive non-monetary package your bargaining team has presented. After eight days at the table, there are still **14 proposals** to which the Employer has not responded, while the Union is still formulating responses to only **two** of the Employer's proposals.

The team understands that careful deliberation of proposed changes takes time and counterproposals cannot be crafted haphazardly. However, given that our team—whose combined earnings are less than those of a single member of the Employer's team—dedicates substantial effort to preparation, it is entirely reasonable to expect the Employer to come to the table better prepared and ready to engage meaningfully with our proposals.

The Union awaits the Employer's response on the following. Members can find details of each proposal with our [live tracker](#) available on [the PSAC901 website](#):

- Articles **7, 8, 14, 17, 21, 22**
- New Article FF (Unnumbered): Surveillance
- Letter of Agreement (LoA)#2: Joint Health and Safety
- LoA #3: No reduction in wage rate resources
- LoA #7: Sexual Harassment
- LoA #8: On-campus celebrations and/or commemorations
- LoA #9: Wellness
- New LoA #LL: TAs' and TFs' course surveys

Key Concerns

Grievances: Discouraging Accountability

In Article 11.07, the Employer proposes language that discourages and intimidates members from filing grievances by introducing the threat of monetary consequences for grievances deemed "frivolous, vexatious, or without substance":

"If a grievance against the University or the Union is found to be frivolous or vexatious or without substance, the Arbitrator shall have the power to award costs against the Party that served the Notice to Proceed to Arbitration."

This attempt to penalize members for seeking recourse undermines our right to challenge violations and hold the Employer accountable.



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Orientation Restrictions: A Distrustful Approach

The Employer maintains its position on Article 5, demanding that the Union refrain from using "disparaging language" during orientation sessions and submit orientation materials in advance. This demonstrates both an awareness of their own shortcomings and a clear lack of trust. Rather than addressing workplace issues, the Employer seeks to control what the Union says, silencing legitimate communications with new employees.

The Union firmly believes that the Employer must address its deficiencies if it does not want the Union to highlight them during orientation. It is our position that members have a right to learn about the protections offered by the Union without interference from the Employer.

Research Assistants' (RAs) Labour Recognition

Your Bargaining Team proposed changes to Article 22 to ensure proper recognition of RA labour and contribution to research. The Employer voiced their concern over the types of contributions RAs should receive in final research products. The Employer's pushback on recognizing RAs' contributions is a sign of their disregard and disrespect for the labour that our membership provides to this University. Your Bargaining Team strongly condemn the Employer's disparaging attitude towards research labour, and we maintain our position that RAs be recognized in research projects.

Surveillance Policy Discussions

The Employer invited the Union to a presentation on electronic surveillance and monitoring policy with Paul Muir, an Information Security Officer at Queen's. Mr. Muir assured the Union that:

- The University does not actively engage in surveillance or tracking on campus.
- Information collected through access systems is not used against employees.
- All cameras on campus as visible
- Spaces with visible cameras are monitored only for investigative purposes, not 24/7.

While these assurances were provided, the Union remains vigilant to ensure that monitoring policies are not used to infringe on employee privacy or rights. We seek to enshrine protection from surveillance in our Collective Agreement, and maintain that our proposal is complementary to the information Mr. Muir presented.



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Expanding Protections Against Discrimination

The Union has proposed expanding protections against discrimination and harassment to explicitly include **caste** as a prohibited ground. Despite the Employer's position that such inclusion is unnecessary, the Union is consulting experts and has invited specialists to provide evidence of its importance.

Furthermore, the Union has proposed being informed—without disclosing personal details or details of the matter—when harassment or discrimination investigations involving members are initiated. This would allow the Union to support members in navigating the University's often opaque and overwhelming bureaucratic processes. The Employer, citing confidentiality, refused this request, effectively denying members much-needed support. This stance reflects a system more focused on shielding the University from liability than addressing systemic oppression, harassment, and discrimination.

Current Status

Both parties have maintained their positions on:

- Article 5: Union representation and activities
- Article 11: Grievance procedure and arbitration
- Article 15: Discipline, suspension, and discharge

The Union remains committed to advocating for your rights and will continue to push for fair, transparent, and meaningful engagement at the bargaining table.

The bargaining team encourages all members [to stay informed](#) and engaged by regularly checking the [Unit 1 Live Bargaining Tracker](#), which provides detailed updates on the status of our proposals and the employer's responses. Additionally, we invite everyone to attend the ongoing [strike information sessions](#) to better understand the key issues at stake, ask questions, and prepare for potential next steps. Your participation is vital in demonstrating our collective commitment to achieving a fair and equitable agreement. The workers, united, will never be defeated!

In solidarity,
Unit 1 Bargaining Team