



CUPE 3906 Bargaining Bulletin #3

Unit 2: Sessional, MELD, and Hourly Rated Sessional Music Faculty

HAMILTON, ON — AUGUST 30th, 2021

CUPE 3906's Unit 2 Bargaining Team met again with our counterparts from the McMaster University Administration for three days of negotiations between August 23rd and August 27th, 2021.

Progress at the table was slow, but the Parties arrived at some agreement in administrative and procedural areas such as Information, the Grievance Procedure, and Equal Pay. Unfortunately, the Employer continued to refuse to provide meaningful gains to your priority areas, including **Job Security, Pensions, and Professional Supports.**

CUPE 3906's team presented our first full monetary pass and was working on a counter to the Employer's response. The parties left the table on Friday evening (August 27th), with plans to continue negotiations, although no dates have been set.

Although the Employer has not taken an aggressive stance with outright concessions this round, they do not seem to be very receptive to improvements in member priority areas, and see the existing agreement as acceptable for the next three years. We disagree. The Employer is also firm on fulfilling its legal obligations to restrict wages and compensation for the next two years under the Conservative's infamous Bill 124. CUPE is one of several Unions signed on to a constitutional challenge of the legislation, which limits the rights of Public Sector workers to bargain in a free and collective manner. As CUPE Ontario President, Fred Hahn, has pointed out, the legislation makes it impossible for front-line Public Sector workers to keep up with inflation, which is currently over 3%.

"It's very frustrating to be forced to work within the imposed legislative restrictions while facing the Employer's seeming lack of interest to make improvements even to non-monetary language that would make the lives of some of its most precarious employees less stressful," says Mary Ellen Campbell, CUPE 3906 staff. "Negotiations are the only time when we can make secure gains for our members that are guaranteed under the Collective Agreement, and we

can't afford to wait another three years to make improvements."

"Some of our proposals, including a targeted pension benefit, actually require very little effort or cost on the part of the Employer, but offer a world of difference to our members, some of whom have been working for McMaster University for 20 or even 30 years or more with nothing to show for retirement," says Sharoni Mitra, CUPE 3906 President. "McMaster likes to claim that it treats its employees equally, but even this ask, which is much less than what most of our counterparts across the table enjoy, seems to have no traction with them."

CUPE 3906's team will solicit dates to continue negotiations with the Employer into the fall term. We will continue to update members on our progress, and encourage you, the members, to show your support for your elected bargaining team by joining our **bargaining support committee**, following our progress and activities **on email and social media**, and **keeping in touch** with comments and questions by emailing mobilizer@cupe3906.org. *It's your contract!*

Our next Bargaining Support Committee Meeting will be scheduled soon- an email with the date/time will follow.

Sessional Faculty, Hourly Rated Sessional Music Faculty, and MELD Sessional Faculty working at McMaster University comprise CUPE 3906's Unit 2. The current collective agreement expires on August 31.

CUPE Local 3906

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