

BULLETIN

Community social service workers vote in favour of strike to back demands

May 30, 2011

Unions call on B.C. government and employers to protect community jobs and services

Frontline community social services workers across British Columbia have given their bargaining committees a strike mandate of 85% in Community Living and 77% in General Services. The vote follows more than 18 months of protracted contract talks that broke down on March 30.

HSA spokesperson Josef Rieder said this strike vote reflects the mounting frustration experienced by community social service workers. "Community social services are in crisis," he said. "Our members say they fear for the clients they serve. By closing group homes, and cutting back services to agencies that are meant to help the most vulnerable in our communities, BC's government is not living up to their promise of 'Families First.'"

At issue are increased layoffs, job security, and a chronic recruitment and retention problem ... all of which affect the quality of care and support that community social services workers can provide.

The union bargaining association says it is time for the provincial government and its employers to step up and provide the respect and resources needed to stabilize services and improve working conditions. Members and supporters can easily send a "fair deal or no deal" message directly to B.C. Premier Christy Clark at www.cssfairdeal.ca

With the strike mandate in hand, the unions are working to establish essential services levels to protect client health and safety in the event of job action. Members are asked to stay tuned for further developments, and to please ensure the union has your most up-to-date contact information. You can update your contact information by logging in at www.hsabc.org, or by sending your contact info to contract@hsabc.org

HSA is a member of the Community Social Services Bargaining Association, which includes nine unions representing approximately 15,000 workers employed by 220 agencies across British Columbia. The B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) is the lead union in the sector.

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