

BULLETIN

Community social services: Thirteen in Victoria targeted for strike action on Thursday, December 13

December 13, 2012

Thursday saw the largest strike action undertaken by Community Social Services workers since they began rotating job actions almost two months ago.

Workers from thirteen agencies are off the job December 13, sending a strong message to government: stop putting vulnerable families last, and provide the resources needed to improve wages and working conditions.

A multi-union event took place from 10 am - 2 pm on Douglas Street at Centennial Square, where members served hot food and distributed warm clothing. Supporters joined them at noon.

Community social services workers are among the lowest paid in the public sector. Their starting wages are lower today -- at \$15.54 an hour -- than in 2002, when a starting wage was \$16.83.

Workers say there are no "savings" to be found that can meet government's unrealistic "cooperative gains" bargaining mandate, as the sector has already been cut to the bone.

Since 2004, the B.C. Liberal government has cut \$300 million in funding for programs that support vulnerable families, people with developmental disabilities, at-risk youth, children and infants in community-based programs, and many other vulnerable citizens."

There are 15,000 unionized workers in the community social services sector, represented by BCGEU, HSA, CUPE, HEU, and six other unions, which together make up the Community Social Services Bargaining Association.

Agencies targeted for strike action on Thursday include: Victoria Women's Transition House Society (HSA), Beacon Support Services (HEU), Community Living Victoria (HEU), Crossroads Human Services (HEU), Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre (BCGEU), Independent Living Housing Society (HEU), Integra Support Services (HEU) Kardel Consulting Services (HEU), Kjos Community Living (HEU), Garth Homer Society (BCGEU), Autistic Homes Society (HEU), Victoria Community Resources Society (HEU), Western Human Resources (HEU)

Essential services levels are being maintained where required.

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