



# Negotiations

Canadian Union of Postal Workers, urban operations

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## Some Important Steps Forward

Today the parties agreed on new language on the duty to accommodate, a study on the use of stools and several items at the compensation table.

### Duty to Accommodate

The union has negotiated a simplified process to accommodate employees who are permanently or temporarily disabled. The process recognizes that the corporation, the union and employees must respect the *Canadian Human Rights Act* on the duty to accommodate.

Employees who have a doctor's certificate can submit a written request for accommodation. The employer must first consider accommodation measures that allow employees to remain in their assignments or in any vacant positions or assignments *based on their seniority*. This is a major improvement. In the past, CUPW members have been accommodated without regard for their seniority.

The corporation must also consult with the union and make every effort to reach agreement on appropriate accommodation. If no agreement can be reached or the situation requires immediate action, the corporation may take appropriate accommodation measures and the union reserves the right to file a grievance.

The parties may agree to designate certain assignments for employees requiring accommodation. Rehabilitation assignments that have already been identified will be maintained unless the parties agree otherwise. All agreements arising from this article must be approved by the National Director and by local management.

### Stools

Canada Post has agreed to contribute up to \$100,000 for a third-party study under the National Joint Health and Safety Committee on the safe use of stools at oversize sortation cases. The study must begin within 120 days after the

collective agreement is signed. The ergonomic study will review if the case design can be practically modified to accommodate the use of stools in a way that won't increase the risk of musculoskeletal injury. Canada Post has refused to allow stools for wicket clerks.

### Compensation table

The union accepted the corporation's proposal on increases for paramedical services, \$300 toward the cost of laser surgery and increased money for hearing aids (see bulletins no. 27 and 28). However, the union thinks there should be a greater increase for glasses.

Canada Post also discussed their proposal for a controlled drug formulary. Under the proposal, all drugs now covered by our plan would continue to be covered. But any new drugs coming on the market would be evaluated for efficacy, safety and cost. Based on this assessment, drugs could be excluded from the plan. Excluded drugs would still be covered, but only at the request of the employee's doctor. The union raised several concerns with the employer's proposal including transparency, decision-making, union involvement and the level of reimbursement.

### The final push

We have a little over 24 hours to reach an agreement on a new contract. The pressure is on. The union will try to make headway on outstanding issues such as the education fund, service expansion (Appendix T), the childcare fund, wages, time values for householders, contracting-in, shift and weekend premiums, longevity pay, internal staffing, picket line protection and seniority.

Solidarity,



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