



Negotiations

Canadian Union of Postal Workers, urban operations

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Tentative agreement: Benefits

The tentative agreement protects and increases our benefit coverage in a number of key areas.

Increased hearing and vision care coverage

The hearing aid plan would increase by \$150 to \$750 over five years. Currently the plan provides coverage of \$600 every five years. The hearing care section of the EHCP also reimburses an additional \$400.00. Overall hearing aid coverage is increasing 15%.

Regarding vision care, currently, the plan provides reimbursement of \$130 every two years and the Extended Health Care Plan provides another \$160.00 of coverage for a total of \$290 every two years. Members would move to a four-year plan for vision claims with a total benefit of \$620 (that's a 7% increase) and a one-time extra \$300 that could be added toward laser eye surgery over the four-year period. That's a total of \$920 for employees who would undergo laser surgery. Co-ordination of benefits for two CUPW members would be \$1840.

The four year periods mentioned above are from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2010.

This is the first time since 1985 that we have had an increase to the hearing plan. It is the first time since 1988 that we have had an increase to the vision plan.

Improved paramedical coverage

Our paramedical coverage for podiatrists and osteopaths would increase from \$400 to \$500. The amount covered for acupuncture and naturopathy would increase from \$400 to \$600. The maximum for speech therapy would increase from \$500 to \$600.

Updated dental fee guide

The agreement also updates the dental fee guides to a one-year lag. In Alberta, insurers would again use the Alberta dental fee guide rather than the British Columbia fee guide to determine recommended rates for dental work (Canada Post estimates this would increase employees' coverage by \$900,000 a year).

Protection from sudden and excessive recovery of overpayment

Canada Post will only be able to recover a maximum of ten percent of earnings per pay period for an overpayment and employees would be given reasons for the recovery in advance.

Pension surplus letter

The tentative agreement includes a signed letter saying Canada Post would not make any decision, such as an employer contribution holiday, on the use of any pension surplus from the portion attributable to CUPW employees. The corporation would be permitted to recover the special payments it made, including interest, into the pension to fund the solvency deficit which has existed since October 2000.

Controlled drug formulary

All drugs used in 2007 would continue to be eligible for reimbursement. Effective January 1, 2008 there would be a single rate of reimbursement of 80% and a single tier. Drugs that are currently in Tier 2 and 3 (reimbursed at 71% or 50%) would require a form to be completed by the employee's doctor. If employees have taken a tier 2 or 3 drug at any time during 2007 they would not

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have to complete this form. Any new drugs coming on the market would be evaluated for efficacy, safety and cost in relation to efficacy. Based on this assessment, drugs could be excluded from the formulary. Excluded drugs would still be covered at the request of employees' doctors provided that employees had tried at least **one** other drug. The proposal includes protections on transparency and union involvement.

Canada Post would remove the current RAMQ exceptions for employees in Quebec.

Child Care Fund

The employer would agree to increase contributions to the child care fund in Appendix L by \$24,000 the first year, \$48,000 the second year, \$72,000 the third year and \$96,000 the fourth year. That's a total of \$240,000 over the life of the collective agreement. The maximum amount, or cap, for contributions to the child care fund would be increased from \$2 million to \$2.5 million so the increased funding could go toward important child care programs such as the special needs project. For more information about our child care fund and programs go to http://www.cupw.ca/index.cfm/ci_id/1304/la_id/1.htm.

Provincial premiums

Seventy per cent of provincial health care premiums would continue to be paid in Alberta and British Columbia. The union would maintain the right to challenge the corporation's position of not paying Ontario premiums in court.

Reimbursement of WCB payments

The employer will ask Sun Life to waive the time limits to permit employees to access disability insurance if their Workers Compensation Board claim decision is overturned on appeal.

Eligibility for retiree benefits

Canada Post would increase the service requirement to be eligible for retiree benefits from 10 years to 15 years; any employee with 10 years service before January 1, 2008 will still qualify.

Definition of full time student

Under the extended health care plan, the definition of full time student would be changed to remove an exclusion for students who are paid to attend a school.

Premium holiday

The premium holiday will continue for the optional hospital expense benefit.

Employee benefit project

The employee benefit project in Appendix GG would be renewed with \$300,000 for the next four years. This joint committee has worked with the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine to conduct some ground breaking studies on the value of massage therapy, acupuncture and naturopathic remedies to address health issues such as stress and lower back pain.

Health risk prevention program

The parties would initiate a health promotion to maintain and improve the health of employees. The union must agree on any projects, third parties, etc.

Compassionate care and long-term elder care

Members would be eligible for leave without pay for compassionate care and long-term elder care.

Quebec Parental Insurance Plan

Amendments to parental rights would include a new reference to the *Quebec Parental Insurance Plan*.

More information will be distributed about how this tentative agreement affects you. Be sure to check your union bulletin board or the CUPW website at www.cupw-sttp.org for more information.

Solidarity,



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