

Bargaining Update



FACILITIES

Facilities bargaining wraps first week

The first week of negotiations for a new facilities collective agreement has wrapped up, with an agreement to return to the table next Wednesday, and more bargaining dates scheduled to continue into April.

In her [opening remarks](#), HEU's secretary-business manager Meena Brisard set the stage for a round of bargaining focused on safer workplaces and the need for bold measures to recruit and retain staff including significant increases to compensation.

"We've been clear with health employers that a significant investment in frontline workers is required if we want our health care system to survive and thrive beyond this pandemic," says Brisard, lead negotiator for the nine-union Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) representing 58,000 health care workers.

"And we have a committed and united bargaining committee who are hammering out proposals that reflect the bargaining mandates adopted by delegates to union bargaining conferences over the last few months."

Brisard says that in the first week of talks, the FBA established agreements with health employer representatives on how to conduct bargaining, and reached agreement on a number of administrative issues.

How the FBA works

The facilities collective agreement is negotiated between the FBA and the Health Employers Association of B.C. (HEABC).

HEABC represents health authorities and Providence Health Care plus those non-health-authority employers (affiliates) that are covered by the facilities agreement.

The FBA is composed of nine unions with HEU representing more than 90 per cent of workers covered by the facilities agreement.

Under the FBA's rules of association, there are 23 voting members of the Facilities Bargaining Committee. Of these, 13 are allocated to HEU with the remaining ten positions allocated to the remaining unions based on their membership numbers within the FBA.

Seven of those spots are allocated to the BCGEU, two to the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 882, and one to the remaining six unions, which are represented in these talks by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 230.

HEU's 13 representatives on the Facilities Bargaining Committee include 10 elected at the union's Facilities Bargaining Conference. HEU's secretary-business manager, president and financial secretary fill the remaining positions.

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Each union establishes its bargaining priorities in slightly different ways. HEU's bargaining mandate is established at the Facilities Bargaining Conference where delegates from Facilities locals across the province debate and adopt proposals and elect their bargaining representatives.

“There were about 150 proposals adopted or referred to the bargaining committee at our bargaining conference late last year and dozens more from other FBA unions,” says Brisard.

“They reflect the pressures and injustices that our members are facing on the frontlines of health care, and our responsibility is to make sure those voices are heard at the bargaining table.

“We will continue to communicate on the status of negotiations, and ensure a united strong voice on the important priorities established by our membership.”

The current three-year contract expires on March 31, 2022.

February 18, 2022