



Public Service Bargaining Unit - September 2022

RATIFICATION BULLETIN

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PUBLIC SERVICE BARGAINING COMMITTEE (left to right): Michael Eso (Secretary and Lead Negotiator), Judy Phipps (Executive Vice-President), Dean Purdy (C1), Stephanie Smith (BCGEU President), Matt Damario (C12), Judy Fox-McGuire (C6), Lisa Lane (Support Staff), Rob Davis (C20), Kayla Woodruff (C6), Kusam Doal (C5), Maria Middlemiss (C12), Paul Finch (BCGEU Treasurer).

Following almost eight months of negotiations and a historic job action lasting over two weeks, your bargaining committee reached a tentative agreement with your employer - B.C.'s Public Service Agency (PSA)—on September 6, 2022.

We started bargaining in late January after spending the fall of 2021 engaged in the most comprehensive member consultation in our union's history. We asked you for a strike mandate in the spring after declaring impasse because of the PSA's proposed general wage increase (GWI) of 5.75% over three years with no protection from rising costs. We knew that offer did not meet your needs, which is why we sought a strike mandate rather than a ratification.

Thanks to your solidarity and strength through the strike vote and job action, and through your committee's hard work over 10 straight days of bargaining, we got your employer to table a tentative agreement that includes an average GWI ranging from 11.94% to 14.38% over three years (depending on inflation)—more than twice their initial offer—in addition to a range of wage increases and protections that will result in many members seeing increases well

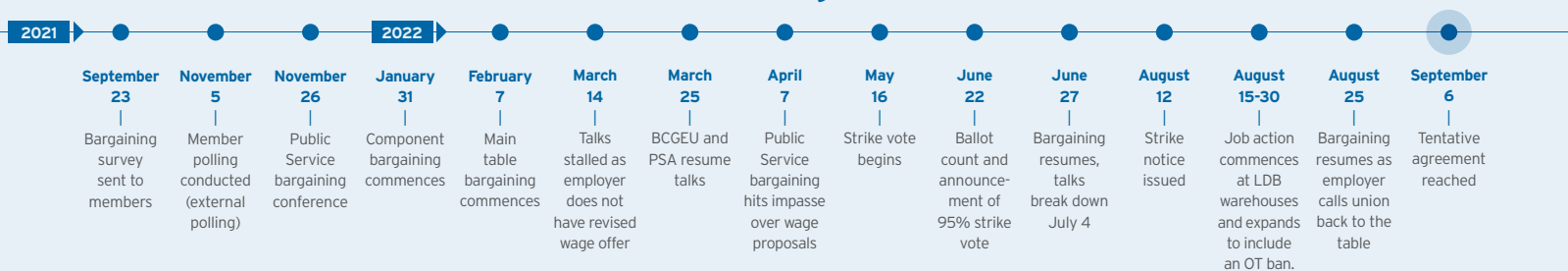
above the GWI. The tentative agreement also includes much-needed improvements in occupational health and safety, mental health in the workplace, employment security, equity and workers' rights and resolves long-standing issues in several ministries.

While we know this tentative agreement does not include everything you told us you wanted, your bargaining committee recommends ratification of the tentative agreement. We also absolutely respect the voice of members and your right to make this decision for yourselves.

We encourage all members to closely review this document and the terms of the agreement and take advantage of our member education forums to make sure you can cast your vote with confidence. This document is your guide to what is in the tentative agreement and some of the issues and choices your committee faced during bargaining. In upcoming member education forums, you will have the chance to raise your questions and concerns directly with your bargaining committee before casting your vote.

This is your agreement.

How did we get here?



How to use this document

This bulletin is your guide to our tentative agreement and the ratification process. Inside you'll find details of the agreement, how to find your component agreement, how to get answers to questions that you may have, and more.



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There are a number of places in this document that link to PDF or other online sources. All of those documents can be found on

[BargainingBC.ca/ratification](https://www.bargainingbc.ca/ratification)

or by scanning this QR code:



Questions about your tentative agreement?

Come to one of our member education sessions!

To ensure that members' questions about the new tentative agreement are answered, our bargaining committee will be hosting a series of education sessions to review key elements and answer questions about the tentative agreements - both the main agreement and your component agreement.

To make sure you are ready to cast your vote with confidence, please plan to attend.

The main agreement - Zoom webinars

- September 20 at 6:30am
- September 21 at noon
- September 22 at 7:30pm

NOTE You will have to log in to attend the webinars.

Component agreements - Telephone Townhalls

- Component 1 - Sept 27 at 7:30am; Sept 29 at 7pm
- Component 5 - Sept 27 at 7pm; Sept 29 at noon
- Component 6 - Sept 26 at noon; Sept 28 at 7pm
- Component 12 - Sept 26 at 7pm, Sept 28 at noon
- Component 20 - Sept 27 at 7pm, Sept 29 at 7:30am

NOTE You will be called when the telephone town hall starts.

What's in the agreement?

To read the full text of these changes, in article order, in the Memorandum of Settlement, visit bargainingbc.ca/ratification

Wage increase

We achieved a number of wage increases in this collective agreement, including the General Wage Increase (GWI) and a number of other targeted increases – see page 6 for more details.

Appendix 3 sets out minimum compensation increases for all members in each year of the agreement (as general wage increases), including additional protections depending on the rate of inflation in years two and three.

MOU 22 Temporary Market Adjustments Moving specific roles to a higher grid level at certain points during the agreement.

MOU 21 set faster grid level increases in the growth plans for Social Program Officer (SPO) R24 Level and Correctional Services (CS) R18 Level.

Appendix 3G See Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB) section on page 5 for details.

Wage protections

In addition to the wage increases, there are also sections protecting wages against rising costs – see page 7 for more details.

MOU Re: Cost of Living Adjustments (App. 3 - Classifications and Rates of Pay) establishes a formula for determining additional wage increases in years two and three of the agreement as a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) if required.

Letter of Agreement Public Sector Wage Increases: A “me too” agreement addressing how general wage increases will be defined and calculated in other collective agreements, ensuring they are equivalent to this agreement.

Allowances

Our collective agreement defines a number of allowances that members receive in the course of their work.

The following allowances have been increased based on the GWI: Shift work allowances (**Article 15.1**), Overtime meal allowances (**Article 16.7**), Vehicle allowance (**Article 27.8**), Isolation travel allowance (**Article 27.10**), Special Vacation Transportation Subsidy for Severely Isolated Locations allowance (**Article 27.23**), Lodging allowance (**Article 27.25**), Meal allowances (**Article 27.9**), Personal property damage allowance (**Article 32.12**), Private vehicle damage allowances (**Article 32.11**), Board and lodging, and relocation expense allowances (**MOU 3**)

Article 27.24 Child care expenses are being boosted to \$70 per day from \$60.

Article 27.26 Members who are registered professionals will receive increased reimbursement rates. Also, three new categories of professionals have been added.

Health and Welfare Benefits

The following changes to health and welfare benefits, and eligibility for those benefits, have been negotiated.

Article 25.2 Counselling services have increased from \$500 per family to \$750 per person. Also, effective January 1, 2023, continuous glucose monitors and sensors will be eligible for reimbursement. These increased services are being paid for by a \$10 increase in the annual deductible and an increase in the reimbursement formula for the first \$2,000 in claims.

Article 31.8 & Appendix 4, Part 1, 1.1 Members who are auxiliary who have completed 90 consecutive days are eligible for five days of illness and injury leave at 100% of their pay as part of the Auxiliary Illness and Injury Leave and Weekly Indemnity.

Appendix 4, 1.3 Change requalification for STIIP from 15 consecutive days of work to 21 calendar days. This will benefit part-time and shift workers.

Appendix 4, 1.4 Members can get a nurse practitioner to sign medical certificates.

Appendix 4, 2.2 Members are entitled to five days of illness or injury leave, at full pay, in each calendar year.

Appendix 4, 2.7 Make it easier for members who have qualified for a disability to requalify on a subsequent, unrelated disability

Job security

Provisions to ensure that members have more options to retain their employment in the public service during times of disruption.

MOU 1 All bargaining unit employees (BCGEU members) with regular status as of April 1, 2022 are covered by all employment security provisions.

MOU 37 LDB Employees will remain direct government employees for the term of the agreement. Also, the LDB will continue to operate a province-wide distribution system for the same term.

Vacation

Changes regarding vacation entitlements and pay-out.

Article 18.xx This clause recognizes prior vacation entitlements should an employee become reemployed after voluntary termination, being on layoff for more than one year or becoming an auxiliary employee.

Letter Re: Archived Vacation The practice of allowing members to request a one-time full pay out of archived vacation is renewed. The time period is to, and including, the 2021 vacation year.

What's in the agreement?

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Special and other leaves

Improvements to leave provisions.

Article 17.1 The Day of Truth and Reconciliation will be a paid holiday. If the government of B.C. declares it on a day other than September 30th, it will be on the new provincial holiday.

Article 20.XX Members will get two additional days of leave, from the special leave bank, during a calendar year for any reason.

Article 20.16 Members of a non-Christian religion can take three days of leave without pay, up from two days.

Article 20.2 (a)(11) Members who experience domestic violence can take five days of leave, up from three days.

Article 21.2 This pertains to the time frames in which members can take parental leave.

Article 21.6 Once members have selected either a standard or extended leave allowance, the decision cannot be changed.

Article 21.8 If members resign or leave public service employment during at least six months or a period equivalent to the leave taken, the employers won't take back any money paid out for benefits.

Article 21.9 Members who don't return to work at the end of their leave will be considered as having resigned at the end of their leave rather than the commencement of it..

Appendix 4, 1.3 Change requalification for STIIP from 15 consecutive days of work to 21 calendar days. This will benefit part-time and shift workers.

MOU TBD Allows employees hired under the IYIP and Work-Able Employment Program - Pilot Project to access special leave.

Working Conditions

Processes aimed at improving members' experiences on the job.

Article 1.10 Psychological and physical well-being have been added to the definition of bullying. The complaint process has been simplified - the union can assist employees in filing, and will receive copies of complaints within 10 days of filing.

Letter Re: Article 12.1 - Postings - Expression of Interest This letter reminds the ministry of their collective agreement obligations and to share posting information for expressions of interest to Ministry Article 29 Committees.

Postings and flexible work

This section outlines processes for working remotely.

Article 12.1 The employer needs to indicate in the job posting whether the position can be done remotely. As well, eligibility lists established through the posting process should be in affect for a maximum of 18 months from the current 12 months.

Letter Re: Flexible Work Requires the PSA to share statistics and other relevant information about telework agreements with the BCGEU.

MOU 40 The use of cross-ministry employee lists (of BCGEU members) is being expanded to speed up the process of job postings and appointments. As well, the eligibility lists will be expanded to 18 months from the current 12.

Equity

Provisions aimed at improving inclusivity and human rights recognitions.

Article 1.7 Gender and Indigenous identity are now protected grounds under the Human Rights Code.

Article 1.9 This language improves the resolution process relating to Human Rights complaints by clarifying the process to refer the complaint to an arbitrator.

Article 20.1 Foster children who are in the care of the employee are now considered part of the immediate family.

Article 20.YY Indigenous employees are now entitled to two days of paid leave per year so that they can participate in activities connected to their culture and language.

Article 21.1 Employees unable to perform their full duties within six months leading up to the birth of a child are now protected under the Human Rights Code.

Article 33 Best practices, aimed at supporting workers with disabilities and reviewing systemic barriers impacting these workers, will be reviewed by the union and the employer.

What's in the agreement?

To read the full text of these changes, in article order, in the Memorandum of Settlement, visit bargainingbc.ca/ratification

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

In addition to the rights outlined in the B.C. Workers Compensation Act, our collective agreement addresses a number of OHS matters particular to our work, including mental health.

Article 22.3 The union must be notified if a union representative is transferred or resigns as co-chair of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. This clause also clarifies that the committee has responsibility to deal with incident investigations as well as other duties in accordance with WCB regulations.

Article 22.5 The duties of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee now included incident investigations.

Article 22.6 Members will receive an increase in allowances for occupational first aid requirements and courses.

Article 22.11 Members who are either working alone or in isolation are ensured prearranged checks on their welfare.

Article 22.18 Requires consultation with the OHS committee when new equipment is introduced in the workplace.

MOU 25 Reinforcing the importance of mental health in OHS and establishing a standard for mental health in the workplace.

Throughout article Added the word "incident" alongside "accident" in OHS clauses.

Union Rights

Article 2.1 The union will receive a list of all excluded positions each year. This enables the union to accurately review exclusion requests.

Article 9 Improvements to arbitration scheduling and processes.

MOU 18 Streamlines the process of exclusion requests.

Housekeeping

Clarifications and corrections in the collective agreement.

Article 10.7 Members have the right to review their employer personnel file electronically.

Article 31.3 Seniority lists may be posted electronically.

Article 37 This agreement expires on March 31, 2025.

MOU 10 Renewal of an early retirement incentive program for members currently receiving long term disability benefits.

MOU 26 Integrating previously agreed amendments to the MOU.

Appendix 2 Change to reflect that Associate Deputy Ministers are treated the same as Deputy Ministers for the purposes of exclusions.

Appendix 3 Changing the names of BCGEU Components 12 and 20. Those components are now, respectively, "Administrative Professionals" and "Environment, Technical and Operations"

Training

This section outlines the creation of new training programs for members.

MOU 27 Agreed to jointly develop a one-day training program for stewards and managers to build constructive union/management relations.

Ministry of Forests/BC Wildfire Service

Provisions exclusive to members who work for the Ministry of Forests/BC Wildfire Service.

MOU 35 Wildfire Service members will receive benefits for one additional month following the end of the season. Also addresses the conversion of current auxiliary employees in BCWS to seasonal regular employees.

MOU 36 Clarified that park rangers and avalanche crews have the same health and welfare benefit eligibility as seasonal auxiliary employees.

MOA Re: FLNRO Classification Appeals at the Joint Technical Working Committee The long standing commitment to review the classifications of all FLNRO employees has now ended. 156 positions have been reclassified. This impacts 451 current and former employees.

MOA Re: BC Wildfire Service Regular Full-time Appointments There is now year-round fire fighting and risk mitigating operations, meaning full-time appointments.

MOA Re: Auxiliary and Seasonal Regular Rate of Pay Upon Promotion Auxiliary and Seasonal Regular employees in the BC Wildfire Service have new language to determine their placement on the salary grid.

Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB)

Provisions exclusive to members of BCGEU Component 5 who work for the BC Liquor Distribution Branch.

Appendix 3G: This increases wages of auxiliary store clerks and warehouse workers currently paid at the G2 level to the G3 step 1 level, effective April 1, 2023. The seasonal employee rate is eliminated as of March 31, 2024 and employees will move to the G3 rate.

MOU 37 LDB Employees will remain direct government employees for the term of the agreement. Also, the LDB will continue to operate a province-wide distribution system for the same term.

MOA Re: One Time Economic Subsidy Payments in the LDB, Ministry of Finance A one-time payment equivalent to \$4.00 per hour for a 16 week period retroactive to April 1, 2022, based on regular hours worked during this period. Payments will be processed within 45 days of ratification of this agreement.

MOA Re: Retail Stores and Warehouse Job Evaluation Plan Aligns the Retail Stores and Warehouse Job Evaluation Plan with the Public Service Job Evaluation Plan.

General Wage Increases

Minimum

11.94%

Cumulative 3-year
percentage increase
(PSA average)

Maximum

14.38%

Cumulative 3-year
percentage increase
(PSA average)

To get a more accurate
picture of what this means
for you, please use our
wage calculator at

<https://calc.bcgeu.ca/>



Other monetary improvements

In addition to the general wage increase, roughly 10,000 members—that's almost one-third of the bargaining unit—will benefit from other monetary improvements, including:

Temporary Market Adjustments (TMA)

A number of specific jobs have been moved to higher grid levels to recognize the recruitment and retention challenges within specific positions. These increases are pensionable and apply to overtime.

Growth series adjustments

Some jobs move up through the salary grid as they gain experience on the job. In order to get members to the top grid level faster, a number of steps have been removed. Members starting in Social Program Officer and Corrections will now reach the full wage level in one year rather than two.



Appendix N

The Public Service Job Evaluation Plan (the Plan) was created in 1998 to ensure that all positions in government would be evaluated under one set of gender-neutral principles. It was a major step towards pay equity. For the first time jobs predominantly done by women and jobs predominantly done by men would be evaluated under the same Plan. The Plan resulted in grid shifts for many positions. In 2001, Appendix N to the Plan came

into effect ensuring a maximum three-grid spread between classifications at grid 15 and above, a positive step for pay equity. Despite repeated attempts by the BCGEU over 20 years to get Appendix N extended to all classifications, it remained unresolved—until now. This tentative agreement includes grids 15 and below, completing the plan: Grids 11 has been lifted to grid 12, and grid 13 has been lifted to grid 15.

Wage protections in this agreement

When the cost of everyday items like food, gas, rent and utilities keeps rising, it has a significant impact on workers. Your committee knows that is why you and your co-workers were so united on your priorities this round of bargaining—wage increases and wage protections.

Your committee worked hard to negotiate a series of wage increases and protections into this tentative agreement. In addition to the general wage increase, many members will be seeing additional increases and protections over the course of this agreement, see details on p. 5.

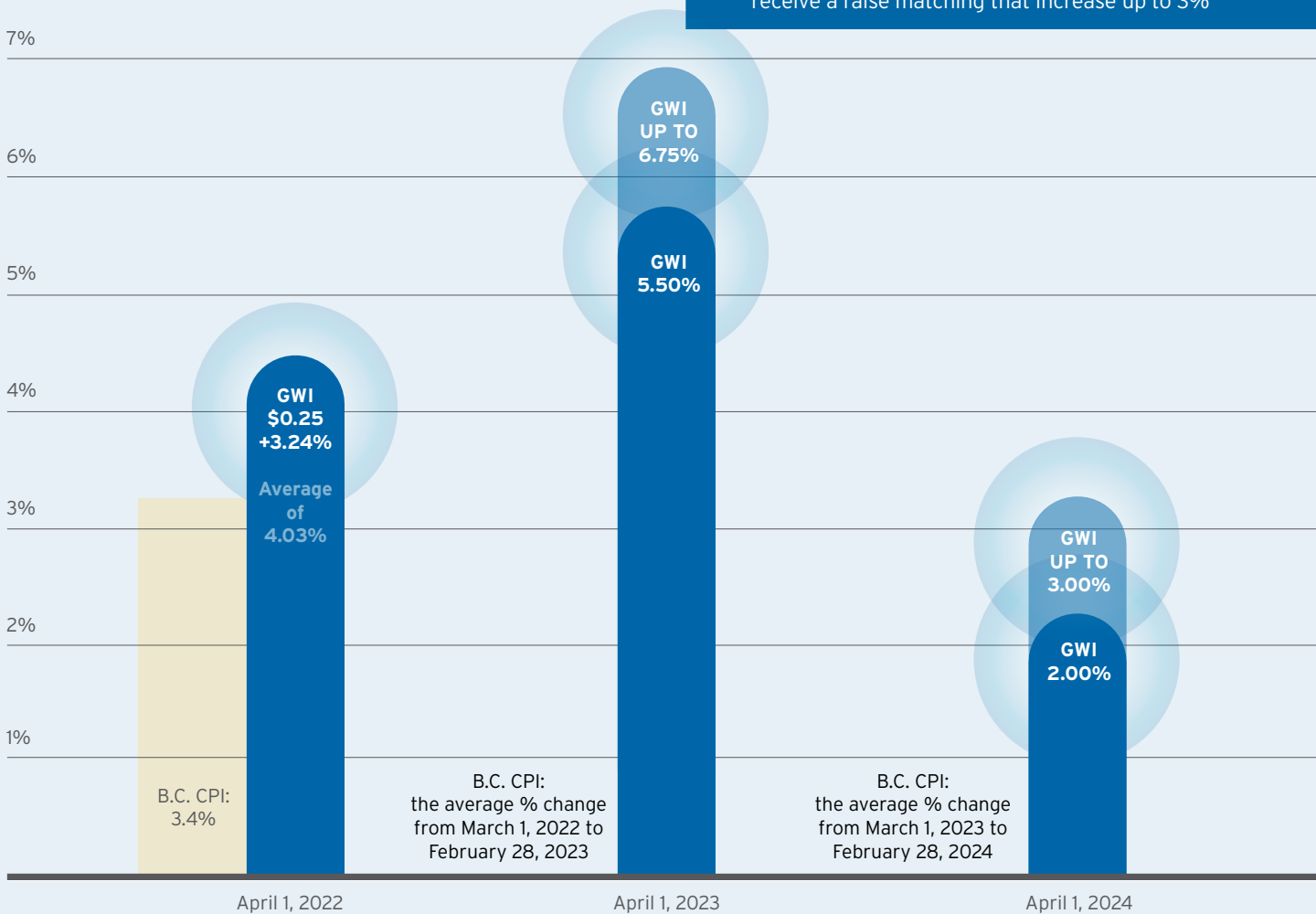
A key feature of this tentative agreement is wage protections based on the average change in B.C. Consumer Price Index (B.C. CPI) over the 12 months prior to the scheduled pay increases—the period of time since the prior wage increase. No one can predict what costs will do in the future, so wage protections that address the impact of increasing costs over a period of time **before** a scheduled wage increase are standard. In fact, this tentative agreement uses the same index (B.C. CPI) and the same calculation (12-month averaging) that is used to calculate wage protections for B.C. members of the legislative assembly (MLAs) and the B.C. minimum wage.

Because wage protections look backwards, we already know the average change in B.C. CPI for the period prior to the first wage increase. Between March 1, 2021 and the end of February 2022 (the timeframe used to calculate annual CPI in this tentative agreement), the average increase in inflation in B.C. was 3.4%. The general wage increase your committee negotiated in the first year of this tentative agreement – \$0.25/hr + 3.24% (an average of 4.03%) – will give all members a wage increase greater than 3.4%.

Use our wage calculator to see what your increase would be under this tentative agreement at bargainingbc.ca/ratification.

Because cost of living can be unpredictable over the term of a collective agreement, year two and three of this agreement include guaranteed wage increases as well as wage protections triggered by inflation.

- **April 1, 2023 - a minimum increase of 5.5%.** If inflation during the 12-months prior exceeds 5.5%, members will receive a raise matching that increase up to 6.75%
- **April 1, 2024 - a minimum increase of 2%.** If inflation during the 12-months prior exceeds 2%, members will receive a raise matching that increase up to 3%



Voting on this tentative agreement

Voting for our tentative agreement will be conducted electronically through an independent, third-party, online voting platform called Simply Voting ([simplyvoting.com](https://www.simplyvoting.com)).

Members will receive voting credentials by email as well as a regular (hard copy) mailer. The credential can be used to log in to the online voting platform, but members will only be able to vote once for each agreement they are covered by. Any type of device (computer, tablet, smart phone) can be used to vote. If you do not have access to a device to cast your ballot, you will be able to go to your local BCGEU office and cast your ballot there.

Both the mailer and the email will come directly from Simply Voting. However, you will be notified by union email when credentials have been issued and what to look for.

To ensure you receive your credentials, please make sure that your address and email on file with our union is correct. You can

see what addresses are on file and, if necessary, update them on the BCGEU Member Portal - my.bcgau.ca. You can also call your local union office and ask them to update your information.

A detailed communication will be sent to you in the coming days/weeks explaining what you can expect, how to vote and what to do if you do not receive your voting credentials.

Voting opens on
October 3, 8am
and closes on
October 17, 5pm

Visit BargainingBC.ca/ratification for links and details on how to attend the townhalls and vote.

Your bargaining committee

Our Public Service Bargaining Committee (PSBC) is composed of ten elected officers of our union and two staff.

Members

These are elected member leaders of our union. They have been elected to sit on our union's Provincial Executive (PE) and sit on the committee by right.

Stephanie Smith	BCGEU President and PSBC Chair
Dean Purdy	VP for Component 1 Correctional and Sheriff Services
Kusam Doal	VP for Component 5 Retail Stores and Warehouse
Judy Fox-McGuire	VP for Component 6 Social, Information and Health
Kayla Woodruff	Component 6 second PE representative
Maria Middlemiss	VP for Component 12 Administrative Professionals
Matt Damario	Component 12 second representative
Rob Davis	VP for Component 20 Environment, Technical and Operations
Paul Finch	BCGEU Treasurer
Judy Phipps	BCGEU Executive Vice President

Staff

Michael Eso	Secretary to the committee and lead negotiator
Lisa Lane	Support staff to the committee

Component agreements

In addition to the main agreement, you will also be voting to ratify a tentative agreement for your component.

Component agreements cover topics specific to your type of work, like hours of work, allowances specific to the duties performed, scheduling of vacation, and more.

To read the details of the tentative agreement for your component, visit: BargainingBC.ca/ratification

You will vote for the main agreement and your component agreement using the same voting credentials.

NOTE If you have more than one job in the B.C. public service you may be eligible to vote for more than one component agreement. You will receive credentials to vote for every component agreement you are covered by.

