

CUPE COMMUNIQUE

Canadian Union of Public Employees **CUPE.ca**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Release: CUPE 882 files Unfair Labour Practice Application with the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board

PRINCE ALBERT: CUPE 882 has filed an unfair labour practice with the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board seeking a ruling on the City of Prince Albert's conduct during bargaining.

On September 29, 2023, CUPE 882 and the City of Prince Albert held a meeting to discuss a return-to-work agreement in the event the union membership voted to ratify the tentative agreement. During this meeting, the employer verbally notified the union that a call centre had been created at City Hall to manage calls during the strike. Immediately upon returning to work, employees would be told that the call centre would remain in place. This change would impact at least four employees in the Clerk Steno classification and at least five employees in the Secretary II classification.

“CUPE 882 was blindsided by this decision. The employer did not disclose any information about restructuring at City Hall or the formation of a call centre at any point during bargaining,” said Mira Lewis, National Representative. “The employer advised that it had no intention and no obligation to negotiate this change. This despite having discussions at the table regarding a City Hall restructuring Letter of Understanding which the employer proposed deleting. They told us the restructuring was complete all the while knowing they were planning this call centre and choosing not to mention it.”

Cara Stelmaschuk, CUPE 882 Vice President is worried about the impact the city's actions will have on workplace morale.

“We were hopeful that the tentative agreement would be a step towards rebuilding workplace harmony and trust. To find out the employer was going to notify employees about restructuring as we walked into the building is concerning. Nine staff might seem like a small number of people, but it is almost 15 per cent of our City Hall staff. Given the current climate, any sudden changes to staffing will have a negative impact on the entire workforce,” said Stelmaschuk.

In addition to the unfair labour practice, the union has also requested that the employer provide the following information by noon, Thursday, October 5, 2023:

1. A list of employees the employer anticipates being impacted by the continued use of the call centre
2. How does the employer anticipate these employees being impacted?
3. Will any jobs/classifications be changed as a result of the creation of the call centre?
4. Will any job descriptions be impacted?
5. How will day to day tasks be impacted?

6. Will anyone's pay be impacted?
7. Any and all other information regarding the call centre that may be relevant to our members that was not specifically requested.

"We are asking the employer to provide this information immediately and to return to the bargaining table, with the assistance of the special mediator, Kristin Anderson, to negotiate the newly identified proposals until the parties reach an agreement. The union will bring a new tentative agreement to the membership for a vote once these new proposals have been thoroughly vetted and bargained," concluded Lewis.

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