



INFO-NEGO #10

May 21, 2020

THE CSN IS CONTINUING WITH THE ROUND OF BARGAINING WHILE REITERATING THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS

As we had mentioned in our most recent Info-Négo, and in accordance with our general orientation, on May 7, 2020, the CSN began exploratory discussions with the Conseil du trésor to try to make progress with regard to bargaining.

Government offers remain unsatisfactory

Recall that on April 2, the Conseil du trésor responded negatively to the CSN's request to suspend bargaining and submitted a complete proposal that essentially used elements from its offer from December 12, 2019, while proposing that the status quo be maintained for working conditions in the public sector for the next three years. The CSN then reiterated its desire to negotiate emergency measures to help Quebec get through the COVID-19 crisis, including fairer and more equitable premiums. The CSN public sector federations also sent a clear message to the government: the current situation should under no circumstances be used as a reason to prolong the resolution of very real issues experienced in the networks prior to the pandemic.

Always with the intent to quickly renew collective agreements for all public sector workers, the government came back on April 26 and May 20 with a global counter-proposal aimed at a final resolution of intersectoral and sectoral matters.

New Wage Offer from the Conseil du trésor

April 1, 2020

1.75% + lump sum prorated to hours worked

April 1, 2021

1.75% + lump sum prorated to hours worked

April 1, 2022

1.5% for rankings 12 to 28 and an increase of a fixed amount of \$0.40/hour for rankings 1 to 11

The government's counter-proposal also showed that it is no longer aiming for the status quo in relation to working conditions. It requested the establishment of sectoral committees, with dedicated budgets, to address work organization issues and to discuss sectoral matters. During the meeting on May 20, the government stated that it was in agreement that sectoral parties should begin bargaining immediately in an accelerated manner.



The CSN puts forward its orientations

During the two weeks that followed the government's submission of its counter-proposal, CSN public sector federations met several times to analyze the situation and assess their bargaining approach.

The following are some of the aspects that stimulated the reflection of federation representatives:

- Great uncertainty regarding the development of the health crisis.
- Public finances that went from a projected surplus of 8 billion dollars to a projected deficit of 12 to 15 billion dollars for this year.
- An unemployment rate that went from 4.5% in February to 17% in April.
- An economic update will be provided by the Minister of Finance at the end of June 2020.
- The use of pressure tactics by unions has been affected by the crisis, particularly due to physical distancing rules and those that limit gatherings and even prohibit them altogether.

However, beyond these aspects of our reality, the importance of improving working and practice conditions and wages of public service workers who were already experiencing a difficult situation prior to the crisis has led the bargaining committees of all of the federations to reach a consensus about orientations for continuing exploratory discussions with the government. The federations have also agreed to carry out work at the sectoral tables as soon as possible, in the context of an accelerated round of bargaining.

EXPLORATORY ORIENTATIONS PUT FORWARD BY THE CSN

Term	3 years
Wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 1, 2020: 2.2% + COVID-19 premium for workers on the front line of \$3/hour or \$4/hour for those providing additional availability. • April 1, 2021: the better of \$0.75/hour or 2.2%. • April 1, 2022: the better of \$1/hour or 3%. • A mechanism for protecting purchasing power.
Working and practice conditions	<p>Begin bargaining work as soon as possible at sectoral tables, at an accelerated pace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of their discussions, sectoral parties should reach agreements on issues related to work organization and any other sectoral elements between now and the agreement in principle. • They may also agree on sectoral budgets in order to continue discussions beyond the date of the agreement in principle.
Premiums, lump sum amounts, and budgets ending on March 30, 2020	Extend them beyond September 30, 2020.
Premium for skilled workers	Extend the premium, expand its scope to certain job titles, and improve how it is applied.
RREGOP	Form a working committee on the RREGOP with the mandate of examining the provisions and funding of the RREGOP, while taking into account its development.
Group insurance	Maintain the size of the budgets in the administrative letters for the insurance plans.

<p>Whistle-blowers</p>	<p>Demand that clauses guaranteeing public service workers the right to denounce problematic situations be introduced into collective agreements.</p>
<p>Other topics</p>	<p>The CSN is also having ongoing exploratory discussions with the Conseil du trésor on a number of other subjects, in accordance with the mandates of all of the federations and the consensus reached by their bargaining committees, which work together on the Comité de coordination des secteurs public et parapublic (CCSPP).</p>
<p>Orderlies and health and social services aides</p>	<p>Note that, alongside our exchanges with the Conseil du trésor, discussions are continuing between FSSS–CSN and the employer to come to a specific agreement about complaints about the maintenance of pay equity in relation to the value of the jobs of orderlies (PABs) and health and social services aides (ASSSs) and other issues affecting those holding these job titles.</p> <p>As part of its counter-proposal, the Conseil du trésor submitted the equivalent of ranking 8 for orderlies in residential and long-term care centres exclusively and for health and social services aides, i.e. \$0.87 at the top of the scale, as well as a contact allowance for orderlies working in residential and long-term care centres of 6% to 8%.</p> <p>FSSS–CSN is demanding that the value of all orderlies and health and social services aides be asserted by raising the current ranking 7 to ranking 10, which represents a rate of \$25.27/hour, i.e. an increase of about \$3 per hour at the top of the scale.</p>

The present situation underscores the importance of consolidating our public services. For the CSN, it is clear that the current round of bargaining, while taking place during an unprecedented crisis, must result in improvements for public sector workers in relation to both working conditions and wages. This observation has also been made publicly by the premier. It is on this basis that the CSN will continue its discussions with the government.