



CUPE 4153 Update

January 24th, 2025

Food Insecurity An Issue?

Are you a member that's having an issue providing food for yourself or your family? Do you find yourself lying awake at night thinking of what bills to pay and balancing that with trying to keep yourself and your loved ones fed and not hungry? We want to help and we can help.

Before the Christmas holiday we had a very successful food drive from our members just to benefit our own members who are struggling. It's kinda like a warm hug from our members to our members - just in food form. I was super impressed and happy with the donations we received and I know the families that came in and loaded up boxes to take home with them were overwhelmed and very appreciative.

Well, the giving continues! We still have quite a bit of food available to any of our members in need. Everything is confidential to myself and Janna, our office administrator. It's just a simple call to our office to set up a time to come in, fill a few boxes and be on your way without having to worry about how much food is going to cost you for the next week or two.

I hope for all of our members in need that this will be an ongoing, year round "service" for lack of a better word that we can provide for our members because like someone much wiser and understanding than I said a long time ago "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care". We're reaching out and making connections with local businesses and providers to add to and expand what we have available currently and that makes me smile.

Sometimes in union life we have to give bad news, deal with people who aren't in a good situation and not have any good answers to questions aimed at us. But this food bank for lack of a better term is all positive news with no strings attached. If you're in need when it comes to food, we're here to smile, help and take some stress off of you.

Strike Fund Issue

I briefly touched on this on Monday when you all were supposed to receive the PowerPoint presentation about the Strike Fund. Well, we didn't have quorum for the meeting so it didn't happen but I guess a few people left the meeting with the paper copy of the presentation and wanted to talk about the options. Right now, there's no options to discuss and there's no vote on the options coming up next week. Currently, I've asked CUPE National for advice on how to proceed as this is a big issue for our Local that involves quite a chunk of money and the Executive is waiting on that advice before making any other decisions on the matter.

Respect

This issue comes up every few months and I get asked to put a blurb in an update about common decency and respect. It's especially important right now as we have about 35 new probationary casuals starting in schools this week. And yes, I know some of you are rolling your eyes and wondering why this is even necessary and I agree with you.

When you're at work you are expected to act, respond and treat everyone a certain way - with respect. That means you don't get to yell at someone or raise your voice, call them a b*tch or a dumb*ss because they don't agree with you on something. It also means you don't get to huddle together with a few other staff and gossip about them and have a little laugh party at their expense because they haven't been around as long as you or don't have as much experience as you.

We talk about the lack of respect shown to us by principals, teachers and pretty much everyone else in the school that we work with from time to time. We don't like that treatment from other workers and we've had calls for this to be brought to management and other unions. How hypocritical is it for us to do the same thing to our own members and make them feel like lower class people?

The workplace isn't your living room and it's not sitting around a campfire with a bunch of friends and you can say or do whatever you please. There are rules. There are policies and there are procedures that will be followed by HR about how we act and how we speak and address others in the workplace. And yes, when the lack of respect is ongoing and happens multiple times or turns into harassment and bullying - any employee can be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Maybe the best idea is when you come into work - remember what your kindergarten teacher taught you - if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

You can agree to disagree. You don't have to be friends. You do have to be respectful. Making a rude or degrading comment about someone to get a laugh out of a co-worker isn't worth losing a couple days pay or possibly your job. Be respectful to others and expect respect for the job you do for the team of staff and students in your school.

Cheers,

Blake