

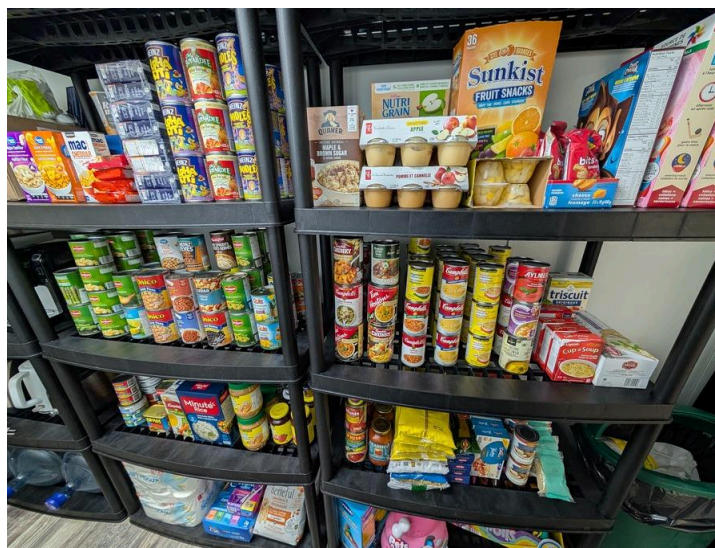


# CUPE 4153 Update

March 7th, 2025

## Food Closet Update

We have reorganized and restocked items in the food closet and we're ready to help more members with their food issues when needed! The food closet is a new program we came up with before the Christmas break and all our members helped contribute to get it started with an amazing amount of food for members and their families in need. We all realize that food prices have gone up and for some the decision to pay bills or provide food can be a very difficult one. We are able to help with food supplies. While we're not a grocery store, we can help with your needs. Best part of it is - it's completely anonymous and free to our members. All you need to do is call the office and set up a time to come in with Janna and she will get you set up and on your way!



## **Staff Survey**

HWDSB Staff have until the end of today to complete the staff survey. The Local is encouraging everyone to participate and share your thoughts, experiences and evaluation of working life at the HWDSB with the employer. You can find the survey link right here - [SURVEY LINK](#) - and it only takes about 10 minutes out of your day.

## **Vacation Payouts**

I wanted to keep up on this issue as I know it affects a couple dozen or more members so here's what I have to share with you today - thanks to HR and Payroll working together, everyone with vacation payouts from last school year can expect to see their payouts on the March 13th pay deposit.

If for some reason there is an error in your payout - members are advised to contact the payroll department by emailing [payroll@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:payroll@hwdsb.on.ca) with their concerns.

## **Snow Removal Issues**

We all know it's not fun to do snow removal. Maybe from inside a truck or plow, but not outside with wind whipping against your face! But what's even worse is running your shovel or snowblower into a heaved piece of sidewalk or driveway and being stopped in your tracks with a jolt. If you have heaved pieces of sidewalk or paved paths that pose a hazard while you're clearing snow - they should be recorded and marked with a pole or something to assist anyone doing the work in the future to avoid injuries. They should also be observed in the spring to see if the heaving has gone back down or if the hazard still exists and is now a trip hazard. Please work with your supervisor to have these areas marked and if needed, a work order to address the issue should be completed as well.

## **Strike Fund Update**

As per a motion made at the February union meeting and approved by members in attendance, direction has been given to our bank to invest the total amount into a term deposit for 13 months providing a 3.55% return.

### **March Break and Beyond.....**

Next week I really hope some of you with lieu time or vacation are taking advantage of being away from work. I was hoping to get away with the kids for a couple days and do some hiking or ice fishing up north, but that will have to wait a couple weeks. Next week - your Bylaw Committee will be meeting and getting started on the process of updating our bylaws. Also, your Executive will be meeting and your Stewards will be doing another full day of training. So, it's a busy week next week and everyone involved is on board and ready to go!

The week after March Break, four of us will be heading to Ottawa for the OSBCU Convention. We leave on the 17th and return late on the 22nd. It will be a full week of classes, lectures, strategizing, learning, networking and building relationships with other Locals and their leaders. We already know who we will be bargaining with and I'm sure there will be lots of planning to get ready for bargaining. The day after we get back, we have a union meeting on March 23rd. We're going to try something a bit different before the next 4 union meetings - something just to share information with members and help them be more educated themselves.

One of my goals when I was elected back in again was to help and educate as many people as I could before I was done. Intense training for elected reps and for broader info for general members. For too long, "union knowledge" was held by just a handful of people - mostly older white men. Our Local has grown to include a diverse range of people from different countries and backgrounds and a few people hanging on to information so that you need to come to them is outdated. Giving people facts and information to help them advocate and stand up for themselves in the workplace to uninformed supervisors is awesome to see happen, and I'm seeing it more and more as each week goes by and it's exciting.

**So starting this month on the 23rd from 9am to 9:45am we're going to have a session on LTO/LTA positions.** We'll have an overview of the positions, what qualifies for an LTO, how does it benefit you, when does it end and when you can use some of the benefits you receive from an LTO/LTA position. We'll share the info, take any questions and do our best to answer them on the spot. This info session will be especially helpful for our casual members who are most likely to find themselves in these positions and will have questions about what they can or can't do once they are in one.

## Ending On A Positive Note

I get tagged in a LOT of emails. Most are complaints about supervisors or co-workers, others are just general questions to someone else that have me in it for accountability purposes and then there's emails that I'm happy to be included in and I had one of those this week from a member that I'd like to share part of it with you....

Dear Bob,

Greetings of the day to you sir,

I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for the exceptional work Jennifer Stokes has been doing. Her dedication to any task given has been particularly impressive. The quality of her work, attention to detail, and proactive approach have significantly impacted our team's success. Her ability to consistently deliver high-quality results while maintaining a positive attitude is truly commendable.

I am genuinely excited to see how she will continue to grow and contribute to HWDSB and CUPE Local 4153. Her hard work and commitment are invaluable, and I am confident that she will achieve great things in the future.

I did respond to that member and thanked them for including me on that email for the simple reason that they took the time to acknowledge and give a boost to someone who was fully engaged and doing their best. Jennifer was elected as a steward not too long ago but is already showing her willingness to get involved, learn, assist members and advocate for them through dialogue and if needed, the grievance process.

Far too often our elected reps get s\*\*\* on by members who aren't happy with the outcome of an investigation or grievance and I hear that a lot. Unfortunately we live in a society where taking responsibility for your own actions isn't very common anymore - it's always someone else's fault. Showing appreciation for a job well done or someone being extra kind or thoughtful and going above and beyond should be a part of everyone's day, but most of us are only congratulated for something once in a blue moon. I'm happy to share good news stories with our members and I'm glad to share this one - maybe it'll encourage more people to give a compliment instead of letting the complainers and s\*\*\* disturbers dominate the communication.

Cheers,

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Blake