



THE CSQ MAKES A NEW COUNTER-OFFER

On May 6, 2020, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) negotiation team presented to Treasury Board Secretariat (SCT) representatives, a new counter-offer for the public sector's collective agreements renewal. That counter-offer, adopted by the General Negotiation Council (CGN) delegation, came in answer to the proposed agreement-in-principle submitted by the government on April 27.

A disappointing employer's proposal

The government's proposal, while offering a timid step forward, was deemed unacceptable by the CGN delegates who met on May 1 and May 5. The almost complete absence of investments in the improvement of work and practice conditions is probably the most disappointing aspect of the employer's position. The current crisis shows, however, the importance of investing in the health network's personnel working conditions.

In education, the situation is not much better. The lack of personnel, personnel attraction and retention issues, work overload and the lack of resources to help students with difficulties did not disappear with the temporary closure of educational institutions. Those problems will be just as glaring when those educational institutions reopen.

The CSQ's counter-offer

After having offered to extend the collective agreements for a 24-month period, the CSQ's bodies accept to engage in discussions to renew employment contracts for three years (April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2023).

This decision aims to answer the government's ambition to guarantee industrial peace during this period. By taking this step, we are expecting that the negotiation results will allow us to really improve the work and practice conditions of our members.

SALARY PARAMETERS

> Salary demands

Our salary claim, which was modified, reaffirms our objective to protect our members' purchasing power. We ask for a 6% raise over three years with a fixed minimum amount of 1.80 dollars per hour or 3,287 dollars per year.

Depending on the salary, the most advantageous raise formula (percentage or fixed amount) is applied. That way, all salaries below 30 dollars per hour or 55,000 dollars per year benefit from the fixed raise. This formula allows us to give special attention to the low-wage earnings.

Our claim unfolds as follows:



Year	Raise
April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021	1.75% (or \$0.50/hour minimum)
April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022	2.05% (or \$0.60/hour minimum)
April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023	2.20% (or \$0.70/hour minimum)

> Purchasing power protection clause

The evolution of inflation over the next few years cannot be predicted. To ensure that the salary raises minimally cover the cost of living increase, we ask for a purchasing power protection clause over the duration of the collective agreement (three years).

> DBD¹, CHSLD, psychologists and specialized workers' bonuses

We ask that the bonuses, which were extended until September 30, 2020, be renewed for the duration of the collective agreement, subject to the demands aiming to improve some of those bonuses.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

Our claims about regional disparities were maintained, with some easing, in order to come to an agreement right away on the main issues. We do not want to postpone the discussions in a committee.

The matter of a compensation for the fiscal damage suffered with the reimbursement of expenses for the third and fourth outings has already been covered by an inter-rounds committee. Within this committee, the government refused to compensate the loss incurred by our members. Yet, last spring, the members of the National Assembly voted such a compensation for themselves, to avoid the damage related to the taxation of their expenses allowance.

INTER-ROUNDS COMMITTEES

In its desire to come to an agreement as soon as possible, the government suggested that inter-rounds committees be put in place to discuss the different issues related to the retirement and parental rights plans.

We told the SCT representatives that we could accept that such committees be put in place by including our own claims on the topic. It is important to note that these committees' mandates are to analyze both parties' proposals and not to come to an agreement to modify those plans.

¹ Disruptive behavioral disorders.

We also suggested the creation of a third committee to deal with external equity. Its mandate consists of conducting an analysis of the wage gap between health, education and college public networks with other public authorities and employees of other Canadian provinces.

SECTORAL NEGOTIATIONS

In its last proposal, the government asks that the sectoral issues negotiation be postponed after the conclusion of an agreement-in-principle at the central table.

We wish, however, to make sure that our federations, who all work to restart the sectoral negotiations, can negotiate and conclude agreements at their sectoral tables as soon as possible.

To achieve this, we ask that the government guarantees a minimal funding envelope equivalent to 3% of the total payroll for each of the CSQ federations. For the Centrale's members, this reinvestment corresponds to a 225 million dollars injection in the public networks to improve their work and practice conditions.

NATIONAL JOBS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The jobs evaluation exercise being a priority for the CSQ, we ask that the demand that a national jobs evaluation committee be put in place, brought to all the sectoral tables, now be discussed at the central table. This demand aims, among other things, to ensure a segregation between the negotiation work and that of pay equity.

In conclusion

In making its new proposal, the CSQ announces that it's ready to further pursue intensive negotiations with the government, as it wants, with the goal to conclude an agreement within a reasonable timeline.

Furthermore, the submitted proposal also sets the conditions that must be met to conclude such an agreement. The purchasing power protection of the members we represent and the improvement of the work and practice conditions through real investments in the networks are for us key conditions for the good continuation of this negotiation.

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