

Weekly Roundup ending March 13, 2020

URGENT NOTICE

AUPE'S Executive met today (Friday, March 13) and passed a motion to postpone all union meetings and gatherings effective March 16 and for at least 30 days to support efforts to combat [COVID-19](#).

POLITICAL

Despite the fact that the legislature wasn't sitting this week, two global events have had and will continue to have significant impacts on the political and economic and – potentially - labour relations landscape in Alberta: COVID-19, aka as the novel coronavirus, and, the drastic drop in the price of oil.

On Monday, Premier Kenney had a news conference which was broadcast live on social media. He stated that he was appointing Dr. Jack Mintz, President's Fellow at the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy and member of the Board of Directors of Imperial Oil) to chair an advisory committee to deal with this "crisis" and the full membership of the committee will be decided later this week (insert that announcement if it is made). Jack Mintz is pretty friendly with the Fraser Institute and is no friend of labour. David Climenhaga offers a fair assessment of the fellow [here](#).

Mr. Kenney was adamant that his government will pass his budget as introduced even as he demanded the federal government rewrite their as-yet-not-introduced budget to adapt to recent events and he made it clear he refuses to let go of the efficiency narrative because (to paraphrase) "on the other side of this crisis the public sector needs to be as efficient as ON, BC and QC. He said he has no plans to rethink his spending restraint plans but is, rather, looking at spending that will have an immediate impact on private sector employment. This may include borrowing. You can watch Mr. Kenney's full Monday press conference [here](#).

AMA and Government Go Back to the Table, Maybe

Over the weekend, the AMA and the government announced on social media that they would be returning to some sort of discussion via a small working group. You can read the AMA President's statement about this development [here](#). Minister Shandro did not issue a statement but held a town hall meeting a couple of days later where he repeated his assertions that doctors were overpaid and gaming the fee for service system.

Bill 9

The [Supreme Court of Canada](#) denied AUPE's application to appeal the September 6th judgment of the Court of Appeal of Alberta. As is their standard practice, the SCC gave no reasons for its decision.

Rural Municipalities Association of Alberta

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the RMA has cancelled their spring convention which was to take place Monday, March 16th and at which AUPE had booked an exhibitor's booth. Among other materials that were prepared for the convention was this [great leaflet](#) that enumerates every single municipality in Alberta in which AUPE members live. Comms staff will be consulting with

COPA and the Anti-Privatization Committee to see how we might best distribute the 300 leaflets we have printed, folded and ready to go out the door.

COVID-19

With confirmed cases now totaling 23, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health announced the province has banned all public gatherings of 250 or more people. They will not, at this time, be following [Ontario's lead](#) and closing public schools. You can read the GOA's full release [here](#):

[AHS's information](#) regarding the novel coronavirus outbreak is updated twice daily.

The union received a copy of correspondence sent from the Deputy Minister of Executive Council to all GOA members regarding COVID-19. The e-mail points them to a [website](#) which is being updated twice daily, myAPS, and reminds workers that the Employee and Family Assistance Program is available as a resource.

AHS – Calgary Zone put out a call for both clinical and non-clinical staff to help with overloads in Health Link, Communicable Disease Control and Independent Assessment Centers.

Health Link needs those with clinical backgrounds to assist with the COVID-19 calls (scripts will be provided and it will be manual paper charting) and those with non-clinical/clerical backgrounds to assist with callbacks and to assist with miscellaneous work in the call centre (faxing, data entering, being a runner to pick up forms from desks).

Communicable Disease Control needs assistance from LPNs and RNs in Calgary to assist with contacting members of the public who may have come in contact with individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Independent Assessment Centers located throughout the Calgary Zone need assistance with Administrative Support, Nursing, Respiratory, Service Workers and Health Information Management. Role descriptions, PPE, and other resources will be available at each location.

If you have members who might be able to/interested in providing assistance, please advise them to 1) [download](#) and complete the [COVID Response Relief Skills form](#) (those links are available only through the AHS staff portal; 2) Receive approval from their manager to participate in COVID-19 Response; and, 3) Send an email to Cal.HRBP@ahs.ca use the word **"RELIEF"** in the subject line of the email with their completed and approved COVID-19 Response Relief Skill form attached.

In all cases, please direct members to check their Employers internal portal/website for the most up-to-date information.

Please direct members with more complicated questions to their MSO or back to the Employer as it is the Employers' responsibility to provide members with necessary information and ensure protocols are in place to provide a healthy and safe workplace.

We are aware that some benefits providers are altering their processes relative to waiting periods for short term disability (STD). We will provide further information about this as details become more clear.

BARGAINING

GSBC: The negotiations team met with representatives of the employer, the Government of Alberta, on March 4 and 5. You can read the update [here](#).

AHS GSS: The employer cancelled the March 11 & 12 meeting dates. Bargaining will resume March 17 & 18. This [link](#) has a summary of the proposals tabled by both sides and a link to the full proposals.

047/002: The negotiating teams for Bethany Rosehaven and Long-Term Care and Tri-Lodges met with the employer on March 5 and 6. It was [agreed](#) by all parties to amalgamate your two different collective agreements into one. Bargaining will resume May 7 and 8th.

Covenant Health GSS: Your Covenant Health General Support Services negotiating team met with the employer on March 9 to start the next round of bargaining. The employer's proposal contains rollbacks that would be devastating to our members. You can read the bargaining update, which contains the employer's and AUPE's proposals [here](#).

118/004: Bargaining with the Town of Ponoka continued on March 10th. The employer responded to our proposals, which we tabled at our last meeting on February 4. They also tabled their monetary proposals, which include no increases to wages or other monetary items. Read more [here](#).

Good Samaritan Society Group Homes: [Negotiations](#) continued last week (March 2 and 3), but little progress was made. It is clear the employer is going to drag their feet, even on proposals that would be of benefit to them.

Emcon/Carillion: The Local 118 Chapters: 024, 025, 026, 027 bargaining team met with the employer for a second time. Good progress was made and a number [of improvements](#) to non-monetary items were agreed to.

Seasons Retirement Communities – Camrose: The Local 047/009 bargaining team reached a [tentative agreement](#) on March 9 that includes strong job security language in a letter of understanding (LOU) and expanded Respectful Workplace language (formerly the No Discrimination article).

ALBERTA LABOUR RELATIONS BOARD

AUPE filed bad faith bargaining complaints against the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services related to the contracting out of jobs at the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM) in Edmonton and laundry jobs at numerous facilities, respectively. You can read about what led up to these complaints [here](#). A hearing date has not been set.

Upcoming ALRB Hearings/Administrative Panels/Resolution Conferences:

March 16, 2020: AUPE vs. Well Being Services (Millrise) Ltd (RC)
Duty to bargain in good faith

March 17, 2020: AUPE vs. Bethany Care Society (AP)
First Collective Agreement

March 17, 2020: AUPE vs. Chartwell Master Care LP (RC)
First Collective Agreement

JOB LOSSES

Since the UCP have been in power we have been notified of the following job losses.

Job losses announced this week (March 6 - March 13):

Previously announced job losses (November 2019 – February 28):

SAIT

Elimination of 98 FTE positions (230 total jobs) starting in April 2020: 68 are currently held by AUPE members and 30 are vacant full-time positions.

NAIT

The president of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) has indicated [between 190 and 240 positions](#) will be cut following Budget 2020's release. Full-time, part-time and casual staff will be impacted.

MHC

The president of the Medicine Hat College indicated some staff will be [laid off](#) after the UCP Budget cut \$540,000 from the school's funding through the Alberta Campus Grant.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) : Reduction of 19 permanent FTEs

- Seven in Edmonton's Injectable Opioid Program
- Six in Red Deer's CPSM
- Six in Calgary's Injectable Opioid Program
- Five Other positions affected in Edmonton's Travel Clinic

University of Lethbridge

Four vacant AUPE positions eliminated: maintenance worker III, systems support specialist II, technical specialist I, fine arts technician IIII.

Week of February 14 - 21: six members affected.

Alberta Innovates

Last year, 48 members at Alberta Innovates received layoff notices. AUPE agreed at the employer's request to extend the notice period so that the members wouldn't be getting layoff notices just prior to Christmas; their final day worked was Jan. 23.

University of Calgary

In early November, the Board announced they were cutting 250 positions (150 FTEs, of which 100 are expected to be AUPE members). Forty-four Permanent FTE reductions were made in the week of February 7 - 14.

Week of December 29, 2019 - January 5, 2020: One temporary term position in Finance/Research Accounting.

Government of Alberta

Employer informed AUPE that 2,500 bargaining unit positions will be eliminated between April, 2020 and April, 2023.

Week of Jan. 31 – Feb. 7: Termination of two temporary term positions in Cochrane Environment & Parks.

October 2019:

- Termination of nine temporary term positions in Children's Services (two positions confirmed).

February 2020:

- 223 other positions in Comms & Social Services (107 positions confirmed).
- Termination of one temporary term position in Culture, Multiculturalism & Status (Edmonton)

EVENTS

Alberta's chief medical officer Dr. Deena Hinshaw [announced](#) Thursday March 12 a ban is now in place on public gatherings of 250 or more people until further notice to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus.

CHECK THIS OUT!

[AUPE](#) members who create an online account before March 26th will be entered to win a first prize 7th Generation Apple iPad and second place prize of 4 tickets to either an Edmonton Eskimos or Calgary Stampeders football game. Thanks to Leibel Insurance Group for their generous donation!

Please remind members to update their contact information so they don't miss out on important updates by visiting: aupe.org/updateinfo

The Pension Committee put together some answers to members' most frequently asked questions about [pensions](#).

[AUPE recognizes social workers after UCP cut social service funding](#)

[Important retroactive pay updates for former Covenant Health GSS staff](#)

[Changes to GOA health/flexible spending account](#)