



**The latest bargaining and mobilizing news for OPS members**

# Arbitrator awards wage increases

Arbitrator Kevin Burkett has awarded a three per cent special wage adjustment for correctional staff, commencing January 1, 2017. The arbitrator also awarded a two per cent special wage adjustment for probation staff, commencing January 1, 2017.

However, Burkett has affirmed a salary grid freeze in 2016 and 2017, consistent with the Unified collective agreement that was ratified last autumn.

Following ratification of the agreement, the Correctional Bargaining Unit rejected the compensation package that the Unified Bargaining Unit had accepted. Further negotiations with the employer led to a standalone collective agreement for the Correctional Bargaining Unit, with special wage adjustments for correctional workers to be awarded by an arbitrator.

In his award May 26, Burkett notes that to determine a special wage adjustment, salaries among classifications, both internal and external, must be compared. He concludes that Ontario

correctional salaries have fallen behind when compared to the differential between police and correctional officers in other jurisdictions.

The arbitrator agreed with the federal correctional officer comparator. The 2000 *Joint Committee Report on Federal Correctional Officers* recorded that, under the Willis Job Evaluation Plan, both federal and provincial officers were rated at 279 points. However, Ontario correctional officers earned 10 per cent less than their federal counterparts and 1.7 per cent less than correctional officers in Alberta and British Columbia. As such, he believes some catch-up is warranted.

“Clearly, we’re disappointed with the size of the award, given the arbitrator’s recognition that our salaries have fallen behind considerably,” said correctional bargaining team chair Tom O’Neill. “We’re especially disappointed with the application of the freeze on wage progression. It’ll be a hardship for members who haven’t reached the top of the grid.”

“However the arbitrator’s decision is a start to better align corrections division salaries with those of other Canadian jurisdictions. It documents the need for catch-up adjustments in subsequent rounds.

“The team will be in discussion with the employer on a number of outstanding issues, such as implementation,” O’Neill continued. “We’ll get back to members with details just as soon as we have clarification.”

OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas said the award was not what he had hoped for, but that the crisis in corrections campaign would continue until the government finally recognized the value of the dangerous and indispensable work that correctional and probation officers perform to keep Ontarians and their communities safe.

“Our correctional staff, both institutional and in the community, do incredible work in incredibly challenging workplaces,” said Thomas. “Their unflinching dedication and professionalism have saved Ontario’s corrections system from total collapse. They deserve our appreciation and just compensation.”



## Your Corrections Bargaining Team

<b>John McLaren</b>	Region 1
<b>Jim Richards</b>	Region 2
<b>Gord Longhi, Vice-Chair</b>	Region 3
<b>Tom O’Neill, Chair</b>	Region 4
<b>Monte Vieselmeyer</b>	Region 5
<b>Scott McIntyre</b>	Region 6
<b>Barb Friday</b>	Region 7
<b>Anastasios Zafiriadis</b>	Staff Negotiator

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**Don’t listen to rumours!**

Table Talk Update is your only official communication from the correctional bargaining team.



Authorized for distribution:

Tom O’Neill, Chair  
Corrections Team

Warren (Smokey) Thomas,  
President