

CHILDREN'S EARLY YEARS DIVISION
PHONE: 519.837.3620
TOLL FREE: 1.800.265.7295
FAX: 519.837.9511

129 WYNDHAM ST N
GUELPH, ONTARIO
N1H 4E9

July 4, 2023

Dear Families of Directly Operated Child Care Centres:

This letter is to inform you of a possible labour disruption at our Directly Operated Child Care Centres that may occur as early as the month of August 2023. We are providing this to you so that you have much notice as possible.

CUPE Local 973

Full-time employees working in the Social Services Department at the County of Wellington are represented by CUPE Local 973. There are approximately 160 employees in the Social Services Department who are members of this Union, which includes full-time employees working in the Children's Early Years, Ontario Works and Housing Services Divisions. This is the only union at the County of Wellington.

Specific to our Directly Operated Child Care Centres, full time Teachers and the Cook positions are part of the CUPE Local 973. Supervisors, Part-Time Teacher Assistants, and Casual Staff are all non-union employees.

The County of Wellington highly respects and values our CUPE staff and honours the collective bargaining process. In coming weeks, we remain committed to working towards an agreement with CUPE Local 973.

Status of Negotiations

There have been seven full days of negotiation held since January 2023. During this period of time, the Union held a special membership meeting and the members voted 100% in support of a strike mandate vote. This is normal procedure and not a surprise.

Before a strike can occur, Conciliation would need to be held, whereby a Conciliator is appointed by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development as a required dispute resolution process. This step is required to take place prior to the union being in a legal strike position.

The Conciliation dates have now been confirmed to be held on July 24-25, 2023.

Although we are hopeful a deal can be reached, we are taking a cautious approach due to the strike vote mandate of the Union members. Due to this, we feel it is important to provide updates on the status of negotiations as they progress. At this stage in the process, we are unable to share the details regarding the items being discussed at negotiations.

Labour Disruption Plan

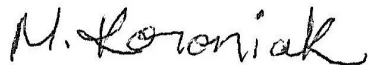
Given that we have non-union employees, we plan to keep all four child care centres open at reduced capacity. We will work to accommodate children currently enrolled to the best of our abilities, taking into account family situations. Spaces will be prioritized based on the need for child care for working families and children who are at high risk.

We will be very thankful for your support during this time. To support us in planning for the limited offering of child care spaces in the event of a labour disruption, we ask you advise your child care centre supervisor by July 21 if you can make alternate child care arrangements for the period of mid-August into September/October. You will not be charged for your child's time away from the centre if you volunteer to not use child care or if your child is not offered a spot during a labour disruption.

We are committed to keep families informed throughout this process and will provide you with updates as they are available. You may also visit the following link for more information www.wellington.ca/labour.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Sarah Lodeserto, Manager of Directly Operated Programmes, sarahl@wellington.ca or at 519-837-3620 x3870.

Best regards,



Mandy Koroniak
Director of Children's Early Years
mandyk@wellington.ca
519-837-3620 Ext 3970