

To all Nova Scotians living or working in long-term care, and families of residents:

For many months, the Province has been working with long-term care providers in their negotiations for renewed collective agreements with CUPE. The Province has worked with these providers to put forward a strong, competitive package for employees in the sector. It matches the deal already accepted by employees in 27 unionized long-term care facilities and those working in home care and hospitals. Unfortunately in long-term care, CUPE has rejected the offer outright without giving members the opportunity to vote, despite accepting it for home care and hospitals. This is concerning, and I sincerely hope CUPE leadership reconsiders and lets members vote on a deal that impacts them directly.

Care and safety of residents remains top priority

As this process continues, I can understand that families, residents and dedicated long-term care staff may be feeling uncertain about the future; and I know that many are concerned about the possibility of a strike. To all Nova Scotians: I want to reassure you that we are committed to the care and safety of residents. It remains our highest priority; and regardless of labour action, ***all residents will continue to receive the essential care they need.***

Most long-term care homes will continue to operate as normal

I want to make sure Nova Scotians know that most long-term care homes in the Province are not represented by CUPE and will continue to operate as usual. CUPE represents 55 of the 143 long-term care homes in Nova Scotia, and at present, only some of those 55 would be in a position to strike if 48 hours notice is provided. This means well over half of the long-term care homes would not be affected if there were to be labour action.

Residents will continue to receive essential care

For families and residents in homes that could be impacted by a strike, I know you must be worried. Please know that **during a strike, long-term care homes are required to continue providing essential daily care, including meals, dressing, personal care, and medications.**

To ensure residents receive the essential care they need, facilities must have an Essential Services Agreement in place before any labour action can take place. These agreements guarantee that critical support continues during job action.

If you or your family member lives in a home that may be impacted, the home's administrator will be in touch to share important details with you about what to expect.

What's being offered to long-term care staff

The Province remains committed to the parties reaching a fair and timely resolution that respects employees while ensuring stability for residents and their families, as well as affordability for taxpayers. As these negotiations have been ongoing, I want to make sure everyone has clear, accurate information about what is on the table.

Over a four-year agreement, the offer includes:

- Wage increases of at least 12%, with some classifications receiving up to 24%, to ensure competitiveness across the province
- Retroactive pay dating back to 2023
- A 70% increase in shift and weekend premiums, increasing from \$2.35 to \$4.00 per hour, effective upon ratification
- The renewed agreements would expire in 2027 at which point the next round of bargaining could begin.

Thank you to long-term care staff, families and residents

To long-term care staff, I want to thank you. I am grateful for the exceptional services and care you provide to seniors, and for the commitment, compassion, and skill you bring to your work every day.

To those who have a loved one in long-term care, please know that their wellbeing remains at the heart of everything we do. We will work closely with all our partners across the sector to ensure continuity of care, accurate information, and support for both residents and staff.

Thank you for your trust, your patience, and your care for Nova Scotia seniors.

Barbara Adams

Barbara Adams

Minister of Seniors and Long-term Care