



To: Mayor Brodie and Councillors
 From: Lisa Whittaker and Colin Dring, Co-Chairs, RCSAC
 CC: Cathy Carlile, Lesley Sherlock, John Foster
 Date: December 9, 2013
 Re: Community Social Services Employers' Association Collective Agreement Update

Issue	Potential impact	Agency or individuals affected	Suggested action
<p>If a Social Service organization receives more than \$500,000 in revenue from the Provincial Government and is unionized, by law they must become a members of the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) that represents the organization during collective bargaining. CSSEA in turn has a reporting relationship to the Provincial Sector Employers' Council (PSEC).</p> <p>In late April, 2012 social services employers (comprised mostly of non-profit community based agencies) ratified a collective agreement that included a modest 3% increase in wages. This agreement was reached with 10 unions after 18 months of arduous bargaining and disruptive rotating strikes. CSSEA led the bargaining on behalf of employers and ensured that the proposed agreement and the cooperative gains identified were approved by PSEC and would not result in cuts to services. A few small savings were identified in collective agreement changes that would provide some funding for the increases, but CSSEA was clear with PSEC and the funding Ministries those agencies would need additional provincial funding to meet their collective agreement obligations. This commitment was given to the bargaining team and communicated across the Province to affected agencies.</p>	<p>It will not be possible for social service organizations to absorb these increases without service cuts that will directly impact the people we serve in the Richmond community.</p> <p>Continued funding cuts will result in the destabilization of fragile non-profit community based organizations.</p> <p>The retraction of commitment from the government after the collective agreement has been ratified, calls into question the</p>	<p>Richmond Society for Community Living Touchstone Family Association CHIMO Community Services Potentially Affected: Non-unionized agencies holding government contracts</p>	<p>1) For information 2) We believe that there needs to be an informal dialogue with the RCSAC City Council Liaison that would begin to facilitate educating and understanding of the impacts of the current position of the provincial government. As contractors we have worked to minimise a decade of cutbacks and refusals to dialogue, much less, negotiate the real cost of services provided. Richmond has seen millions in service funds from MCFD disappear. Community Living has experienced constant service and funding cut backs. It is unrealistic for agencies to find efficiencies to cover these</p>

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<p>As a non-profit social service agency our expenses are mainly associated with staffing and we do not have surpluses to cover additional cost related to wage increases. In addition, social service and community living agencies have experienced ongoing cutbacks and reductions for a number of years. In the midst of these ongoing reductions, we continue to face increasing, business related, health and welfare benefits and statutory costs (i.e. Family Day) for which we have never received funding.</p> <p>Therefore, the commitment from the government to provide the additional funds for a small wage increase for employees in the Social Service sector was the only reason the collective agreement was ratified by social service agencies.</p> <p>Given the above, agencies were shocked and are very concerned when, after the election, government retracted their commitment to fund these increases. The implications of this decision are significant and will be far reaching.</p> <p>Ministries of Children and Family Development, Social Development and CLBC, Justice and Health are now asking community agencies to find the funds for these negotiated increases within their existing budgets and without any impact on services. This is not acceptable, nor is it possible.</p> <p>Agencies have a legal responsibility to pay these wage increases. They will have no choice but to cut services to individuals and families in our communities should the province not honour its promise to provide funding. In a service-based sector where over 80% of costs are for compensation and benefits, there are few efficiencies remaining that could cover a 3% increase in wages. This is the first time that the community services sector has been asked to cover the costs of a negotiated wage increase from existing funding.</p> <p>While the government is starting the discussions with unionized agencies as outlined above they are also requesting information from non-unionized agencies re: implementing these wage increases. This means the implications for the sector can be very broad.</p>	<p>trust and viability of the very system and structure designed by government to coordinate public sector compensation.</p>		<p>increases. (Cooperative Gains)</p> <p>We can tell that the service infrastructure is about to fail and we would hope that with an informal discussion with the RCSAC Council Liaison that we would have you assist in advocating for services to remain here in this community.</p>