

Union News



May 2025

To All UFCW Local 649 Members,

Spring has arrived, and with it comes new energy and momentum for the work we're doing together as a union.

As we move into a new season and prepare for the important work ahead, we want to take a moment to thank you for your continued support and solidarity. Whether it's showing up to a meeting, speaking out on workplace issues, or simply staying informed, your involvement strengthens our union every day.

With bargaining approaching in 2026, your participation is more crucial than ever. Throughout the year, we'll be holding meetings, sharing updates, and gathering your input to ensure our priorities reflect the voices of all members. It is our intention to conduct one-on-one meetings with every member of our union in the coming year – a process that has already begun. Your voice matters, and these conversations help make sure everyone in our union is informed, involved, and ready to stand together.

General Membership Meetings are where we discuss priorities, answer questions, hear your input, and build the solidarity we need at the bargaining table. Decisions made now will shape our next contract. Your presence matters – make sure your voice is part of the conversation.

Your collective bargaining agreement isn't just about getting a raise. When we negotiate, we're defining the rules that govern your safety, stability, and dignity at work. The recent decision by FCL to close the Saskatoon Feed Mill location is a good reminder of the importance in maintaining and strengthening language in our collective agreement. Job security language in our collective agreement isn't just words on paper – it's protection. These articles set clear rules round layoffs, seniority, bumping, subcontracting, and recall rights. They ensure that decisions affecting our livelihoods aren't made arbitrarily or unfairly.

While any job loss is painful, our collective agreement stepped in to soften the blow:

- **Advance Notice and Severance:** Members received the required 90-day notice and severance pay equal to one week of pay for each year of completed service up to a maximum of twenty-six weeks, giving everyone time to plan, as well as financial support during possible transition.
- **Recall and Bumping Rights:** Laid-off members have the right to "bump" within the bargaining unit to avoid a layoff and keep them on payroll. Your length of service safeguards you from outright layoff, ensuring less-senior colleagues are displaced before you.

Important contract provisions such as these are often taken for granted. In our last round of bargaining, the company pushed hard to remove our cross-unit bumping clause. If they had succeeded, we would have lost our ability to bump into other classifications, undermining one of our strongest job-security protections.

These contract provisions wouldn't exist without your collective voice and active participation in bargaining. As we move forward, let's continue to strengthen our job-security articles so we're even better prepared for whatever comes next.

Solidarity is the foundation of everything we can achieve together. Solidarity means you're never alone – your rights and interests are defended by the entire membership. Believe me when I say, management takes notice when we act in unison. We hope to see you all at our next meeting to stand alongside your fellow members – because together, we're stronger than any one of us alone.

REMAINING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS 2025:

Wednesday May 28 at Sutherland Hall (1112 Central Avenue).

There will be meetings at 11am, 2:30pm, and 7pm to accommodate all shifts. There will be no exemptions for this date unless a member is out of town on vacation. Anyone who attends will receive \$50 on their year-end assessment cheque.

Wednesday August 27 at 7pm, Sutherland Hall.

Every member who attends this meeting or submits a valid meeting exemption (such as working the night shift) will receive \$30 on their year-end assessment cheque.

Wednesday November 26 at Sutherland Hall.

There will be multiple meeting times throughout the day at the hall to accommodate all shifts. There will be no exemptions for this date unless a member is out of town on vacation. Anyone who attends will receive \$50 on their year-end assessment cheque.

Anyone who attends all 4 meetings or attends the May and November meetings and has submitted valid exemptions for the February and/or August meetings will receive an additional \$40 on their year-end assessment, for a total of \$200. *All members MUST have attended at least one meeting in 2025, or they will not be paid for February/August exemptions.*

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions about anything.

In Solidarity,
Brant Palko

B. Palko

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