

Union News



May 2026 Newsletter

To All UFCW Local 649 Members

Next General Membership Meeting: Wednesday, May 27, 2026.

Multiple meeting times will be offered throughout the day at the hall to accommodate all shifts. Please note that exemptions will not be granted for evening or night shift staff. Members who attend this meeting will receive \$40, payable on their year-end incentive cheque. Scheduled times are 11:00 am, 2:30 pm, 4:00 pm, and our new meeting time of 5:30pm. There will be no 7pm meeting. We'll try it for this quarter and see what everyone thinks.

As a reminder, an additional \$40 (totaling \$200) will be awarded to those who attend all four meetings or have approved exemptions for one or two meetings.

IMPORTANT: *All members are required to attend at least two meetings in 2026 to be eligible for the additional \$40 payment.* Exemptions are limited to two meetings per calendar year for reasons such as vacation leave.

BARGAINING:

Our current collective agreement is set to expire on October 31, 2026. Securing a fair contract that recognizes your dedication and hard work remains our primary objective for this year.

I want to thank everyone who took the time to complete the bargaining survey. Your input sets a clear direction for the priorities ahead. Our committee members are Brant Palko, Tammy Gust, Tina Keats-Gould, Curt Miller, and Kevin Materi, with Lily Olson from UFCW Canada assisting. Please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on the committee if you have any questions or suggestions.

PROPOSED DUES INCREASE:

I'm going to level with you; our current dues are not keeping pace with our costs. Our dues have always been low compared to other Unions, and we've tried hard to keep them that way, but with the cost of everything rising, we find ourselves cutting corners.

To be clear, the Union Executive pushed for a higher increase the last time we raised dues, and I resisted because of the cost of living. Unfortunately, the decision I made only resulted in kicking the can down the road. A dues increase is a responsible step to ensure the Union has the resources to properly represent members, enforce the collective agreement, and be fully prepared for bargaining.

We are facing an employer with significant resources, experienced legal and labour relations support, and a coordinated approach to negotiations and workplace decision-making. Meeting that level of sophistication requires a union that is equally prepared – financially, strategically, and organizationally. A strong union response depends on sustaining the capacity to match what is across the table, not just in intent, but in execution.

A dues increase is a necessary step to keep our Union strong and prepared for the challenges ahead. We're asking for your support to ensure we have the resources to represent you effectively, enforce the agreement, and meet a well-resourced employer on equal footing.

The proposed dues increase of \$5 per pay period will be put to a vote at the upcoming meeting. Please plan to attend and cast your vote so your voice is heard.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our union and to one another.

Stay informed, involved, and united.

In solidarity,

B. Palko

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