



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO EDUCATION WORKERS

300-208 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3B4

☎: 416.593.7057; 📠: 416.479.3941

info@cupe3902.org; www.cupe3902.org

Executive Committee

22 July 2019

Chair:
Jess Taylor

Bill 124: What is it and how does it affect us at C.U.P.E. 3902?

Secretary-Treasurer:
Amy Conwell

What is Bill 124?

Vice Chair, Unit 1:
Kate Brennan

In June 2019, before the Ontario Conservative Government broke for a five-month break, they tabled Bill 124 – Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act, 2019 – which caps public service wages and compensation net increases to 1% a year and gives the government big-brother powers to interfere with Collective Bargaining. Bill 124 applies to us (all members of CUPE 3902!) because we work for a publicly-funded institution.

Vice Chair, Unit 3:
Kristin Cavoukian

Vice Chair, Unit 5:
Glenna Kramer

What does Bill 124 do?

Vice Chair, Colleges:
Merlin Charles

Bill 124 would cap net monetary gains for both unionized and non-unionized public sector workers at a maximum of 1% per year of the contract for all benefits of monetary value, including wages and salary, healthcare insurance, childcare support, and the benefit funds that many CUPE 3902 workers rely on, all without accounting for an inflation rate of nearly 2%.

*Communications/
Recording Secretary:*
Fang Xi Lin

Internal Liaison Officer:
Hamish Russell

How does Bill 124 impact unionized workers?

External Liaison Officer:
Mahdi Zamani

For unionized workers, if their Union and the Employer negotiate gains above 1%, Bill 124 gives the Ministry of Labour the unilateral power to veto the agreement and send the parties back to bargaining, thus interfering directly in collective bargaining rights.

Grievance Officer:
Jamie Ashby

Bill 124 also gives the President of the Treasury Board the power to nullify collective agreements and arbitration awards that do not comply with these criteria.

Executive Director:

Wayne Dealy

Is Bill 124 in effect?

Staff Representatives:

Rebecca Strung

No, Bill 124 is currently not in effect as it was just tabled on 5 June 2019. The legislature is not meeting again until October 28, 2019. Although Bill 124 has not yet been passed, the language if passed would apply to collective agreements and arbitration awards retroactive to 5 June 2019, which means that Locals currently negotiating agreements could be directed to revise their agreements to be compliant.

Tiffany Balducci

Tamara Williams

Does Bill 124 only limit wages?

No, Bill 124 limits the total compensation package to a 1% increase per year. The language says that this includes: “anything paid or provided, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of an employee, and includes salary, benefits, perquisites and all forms of non-discretionary and discretionary payments.” This includes employer-paid health and dental benefits and monetary funds (EFAF, childcare, professional development, etc).

If we aren't bargaining now, will this affect us?

Yes. Bill 124, if passed, will force negotiated cuts at the bargaining table, since we no longer will be able to keep up with inflation (usually 1.5-2.5% a year, depending on location) or the increasing cost of living for our members, such as the ballooning price of rent.

It will also limit our ability to fight for better working conditions because we will not be able to take job action for monetary gains.

Which units will be affected by Bill 124?

Most immediately, Unit 5, representing Post-Doctoral Fellows at the University of Toronto, is currently preparing to enter bargaining in the fall. Unit 1, our largest unit, will be at the table next in 2020, followed closely by Unit 3, our second largest unit, in 2021.

This bill will likely affect Units 2 and 4 when they return to bargaining. In general, the bill is designed to curb labour unions' ability to secure better collective agreements and working conditions.

If we wait out Bill 124, will it go away?

No. Bill 124 includes a provision which prohibits salary or compensation increases before or after what it calls "a moderation period" (the time the Bill would apply) which is three years following the expiration of a collective agreement, retroactively including anything which expired on June 5, 2019 or afterwards. For most locals, including ourselves, this moderation period is about one contract round as our collective agreements generally have had a term of three years.

This means, in essence, that we will not be able to bargain real and meaningful increases in order to make up for losses after the moderation period ends. The only way we can mitigate the circumstances of Bill 124 is to kill it before it becomes law.

Who else is impacted?

Bill 124 will impact many public service workers across different sectors. The bill applies to workers in Provincial government (core public service, agencies, boards, commissions, etc.); School Boards, Universities & Colleges; Hospitals & not for profit Long-Term Care Homes; Children's Aid Societies; air ambulance service; Ontario Power Generation and the Independent Electricity Systems Operator; Non-profit organizations who received at least \$1M in funding from the province; Organizations where a majority of directors/officers/members are appointed by the Province, and any other organization set out in regulations. It does not apply to for-profit organizations or municipalities.

As well as directly affecting C.U.P.E. 3902 members in their workplaces, it will also affect the workers who are providing services to our members and their families.

What can we do to stop Bill 124 from getting passed?

Express your Concerns directly to a MPP

- Write your MPP using the template provided on our website dedicated to mobilizing against the cuts, changes, and caps being imposed on our workplaces
<https://www.cupe3902.org/mobilizing-against-ford/>

- Contact the Premier to give feedback on how this bill will affect you
<https://correspondence.premier.gov.on.ca/EN/feedback/default.aspx>

Get Involved in Fightback Efforts

- C.U.P.E. 3902's Mob Comm is currently looking for engaged members to fill campaign service opportunities for their Resourcing the Rank-n-File: Ford Cuts campaign:
<https://www.cupe3902.org/2019/07/union-service-opportunities/>
- We are looking for members willing to volunteer during events, actions, and other Fightback campaign-related activities. Get in touch with us!
- Forward this information onto five of your colleagues. We need to educate each other on the changes that are impacting our workplaces

Want to know more? Here you can find the original text of the bill and more resources for understanding it:

The original bill, tabled 5 June 2019: <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-124>

Goldblatt & Partners' Summary and Analysis of Bill 124: <https://goldblattpartners.com/news-events/news/post/heres-our-summary-and-analysis-of-bill-124/>

OCUFA's FAQ: <https://ocufa.on.ca/assets/OCUFA-Wage-cap-legislation-FAQ-EN.pdf>