



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**MARCH 29, 2017 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Community Living Campbellford/Brighton Labour Dispute**

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of Community Living Campbellford Brighton and the management team, we feel that the time has come to clear up some of the misinformation that has been circulated about employees using their personal vehicles to provide transportation to people supported by the Organization, and our position on this issue during our collective bargaining negotiation with OPSEU.

News releases and social media have stated that it has always been voluntary for employees to use their vehicles and that management is now trying to introduce a brand new job expectation. This is simply not the case. It has always been a requirement for employees to use their own vehicles when the people we support require transportation and there are no other viable options available. When employees use their own vehicle for this purpose they are paid mileage. The Organization also contributes to any additional insurance costs which they may incur in order to do such driving.

A number of employees have indicated since bargaining broke down, that this has been an expectation for as long as they've worked here. They do not understand why it is such an issue for the union. It has simply been a fact of life in a rural area and is no different from other rural service providers in the province. All employees of this Organization, prior to starting work, have been required to sign a contract which includes an acknowledgement of this requirement.

Until 2015, there was no issue raised by employees with respect to this. In 2015, however, the Union filed a grievance alleging that employees could not be required to use their own vehicles to provide transportation to people supported. From our perspective, this grievance flew in the face of decades of past practice and the clear requirements set out in their contracts of hire. During this round of negotiations we have simply sought to include language in the collective agreement confirming this decades old requirement so that we would not have to spend tax payer money unnecessarily on an arbitration and deal with increased incidents of employees refusing to use their own vehicles. We have not sought to introduce a brand new requirement. Quite the opposite, in fact. We have simply sought to confirm a longstanding one.

This is also not a case where the Organization is refusing to invest in its own vehicles. We currently have a fleet of 14 vehicles and part of our offer to the Union is to purchase 2 additional vans. We have also committed to the union that we will continue to request replacement vehicles from our funder, the Ministry of Community & Social Services. Among rural service providers, CLCB has more vehicles in its fleet than virtually any other. Unfortunately, even a fleet of vehicles of this size is not enough to cover all of the occasions when transportation is needed for people to participate in the community to the utmost of their ability. We require, on occasion, that employees use their own vehicles to accomplish these goals. If use of an employee's personal vehicle was voluntary instead of a necessary requirement by our employees, the people we support might not be able to participate in the community to the extent that they are currently able.

To further clarify this issue, our statistics from the period of April 1, 2016 to the end of February 2017, show that out of the approximate 100 employees in the bargaining unit, 57 employees did not utilize their personal vehicles on agency business at all, and out of those 100, only 12 drove their own vehicles enough to receive more than \$500.00 in mileage.

Another item raised in the media by the Union is the claim that the wage offer we tabled is inadequate. Like many employers in our sector, we have struggled to find the money to finance our operations. The offer we have tabled (a \$750.00 lump sum payment for full-time employees in the first year with a pro-rated amount for part-timers in the first year of the agreement, and a 20 cent per hour across the board increase in the second year) is comparable to most of the settlements which have been reached in our sector. The second year increase would occur on April 1, 2017 and would bring our employees' wage grid to the following level:  
Full Time \$23.10 – \$24.69 and Part Time \$19.04 – \$20.24 with a comprehensive benefit package for full time, dental and eye glass coverage for part time, and matched RRSP contributions for both.

I understand that during a labour dispute one, or both, of the parties involved may attempt to gain public support for its position. Those efforts should be based on all of the facts and set in the actual context of the situation. There are additional facts which can be found on our website at [www.communitylivingcampbellford.com](http://www.communitylivingcampbellford.com).

Yours very truly,

Nancy Brown