

Collective Bargaining

What is the collective agreement?

The collective agreement between the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) sets out the terms and conditions of employment for unionized employees and contains guidance for managers and employees on a range of issues. The collective agreement includes rates of pay, how leave is earned and used as well as how disputes are resolved.

What is collective bargaining?

Collective bargaining is the process through which employees, represented by their union and management in an organization, come together to meet and negotiate to determine the terms and conditions of employment.

A collective agreement is the labour contract reached during collective bargaining between an employer and a union.

The Union of Northern Workers (UNW) is the union that represents the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) employees. The Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers and the Minister Responsible for NTPC expired on December 31, 2014.

Negotiations are now underway to reach agreement on a new collective agreement.

How does collective bargaining work?

Each party develops an opening proposal for negotiations. The parties then sit down, exchange proposals, review and discuss the individual elements of each party's proposal. This can be a very time-consuming process, as each party may need to take time to discuss among themselves whether each element of the other party's proposal is satisfactory.

During negotiations, each party may choose to withdraw or amend elements of their proposal, as well as to agree to proposals from the other party. When agreement is reached on each item, it is signed off by both parties.

Who decides when collective bargaining takes place?

Under the Northwest Territories' *Public Service Act*, either party can decide when they want bargaining to begin. To start the process, either the UNW or NTPC serves notice to the other party. Once notice has been served the parties commence negotiating within 60 days, or a later date as agreed upon by both parties.

What are the timelines?

The bargaining process began on October 13, 2015. The conclusion of negotiations depends on the parties.

What does NTPC currently offer?

NTPC is pleased to offer a range of compensation, benefits and opportunities to its employees. Great benefits, including:

- Public service pension:
- Leave entitlements
- Employee and Family Assistance Program that supports employees facing challenges either at work or personally/at home
- Public service health care plan
- Dental benefits
- Supplementary death benefits
- Disability insurance

Working for NTPC also provides:

- The ability to acquire a diverse set of skills, given the broad scope and issues staff have the opportunity to become involved in;
- A family-friendly work environment;
- Good opportunities for work-life balance;
- Opportunities for career growth, development and advancement.

NTPC also offers employees the opportunity to work in beautiful pristine locations and experience richness of different cultures and traditions.

The current collective agreement expired on December 31, 2014. What has been happening since then?

The parties have been working together to set dates for negotiations. A number of factors played into the need for a delay in the start of bargaining, however negotiations have begun.

While the current agreement has, through provisions in the *Public Service Act*, the terms and conditions of employment remain in place until a new agreement is concluded.

How long will the new agreement last?

The length of the agreement is an item for negotiation.

How many people does this collective bargaining affect?

There are approximately 135 unionized positions at NTPC.

When does bargaining begin? How long will negotiations last?

The union and NTPC will first meet to exchange proposals and hold initial discussions the week of October 13, with future sessions scheduled as necessary.