

## **CUPE 3913 Statement on Filing for Conciliation**

Members of CUPE 3913,

Since October of 2023, your bargaining team has worked hard to negotiate in an even and transparent way with the University. It was our commitment from the start to arrive at a fair agreement before the end of this semester.

Despite expressing a similar commitment at the beginning, as well as agreeing to specific changes in proposals around accommodations, seniority, and leaves, the University team has worked very slowly, often taking weeks at a time to respond to our proposals. When they do respond, they often reject without solutions. They often provide surface-level answers and refuse to engage with our proposals beyond that which is legally required of the university.

In other words, they are coming back at us with the bare minimum, and we have yet to begin negotiating the monetary proposals..

So if we continue with negotiation as usual, there will likely be more difficulties, stalling, and outright refusals to come prepared to negotiate. We also fear that their consistently slow responses will drag out the negotiation process, pushing bargaining into the summertime. If that happens, we risk facing a lockout from the University, like CUPE 3906 (McMaster) experienced last year, which would be disastrous for all members.

During a lockout it would be impossible for us to bargain for any of the things we are fighting for - improved wages, tuition reimbursements, reduced exploitation of international workers, expanded mental health supports, or stronger job security, all of which are urgently needed to help graduate students and sessional instructors face the financial difficulties we all face.

It is clear to us that the University does not take its own motto of "Improve life" as seriously as we do. Accordingly, we are filing for conciliation. Conciliation is the first step towards strike action in which the two parties negotiate with a government mediator in an effort to quickly reach an agreement.

We have a scheduled Q&A session for **Thursday, February 8 from Noon to 2:00 PM** to address any members' inquiries or concerns:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82862975765?pwd=VW1udmdYTnVZK1o1U0tZS1Exb1RpZz09> The Password is: **705330**. The Session will be recorded and distributed.

We will also schedule Union “Office Hours” for the weeks of February 12 -16 and 19 - 23. We will update members with days and times soon.