



September 25, 2024

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Union serves strike notice at Fort Simpson Housing Authority as workers prepare to take action for their community**

*Members of UNW Local 13 will begin job action next week if a fair deal is not reached at the bargaining table.*

**FORT SIMPSON, NWT** - The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), which represents Union of Northern Workers (UNW) Local 13 members employed by Fort Simpson Housing Authority, has served the required 72-hour strike notice to NWT Housing. A strike could occur as early as October 1 if the union is unable to reach a tentative agreement with the employer.

This follows a strike vote in August in which members of this bargaining unit delivered a unanimous mandate to fight for fair wages and improved services for their community.

These workers primarily support the community of Fort Simpson, in addition to providing services to Jean Marie River, Sambaa K'e, Nahanni Butte, and Wrigley. They are demanding that the employer come to the table with economic increases that reflect the value of their work and will enable the longer-term recruitment and retention of employees.

"Our members have unanimously told us they are ready to take action for fair wages, better working conditions, and improved services for their community," said Josee-Anne Spirito, PSAC Regional Executive Vice-President for the North Region. "We are committed to reaching a fair deal for these workers and expect the same from this employer."

On Friday, Spirito delivered a petition to Nahendeh MLA Shane Thompson on behalf of more than 200 Fort Simpson residents and supporters demanding a more equitable society where everyone has access to safe, affordable, and comfortable housing, and calling on elected officials to support workers and families.

Chronic underfunding of housing by the Government of Northwest Territories is having real impacts on Housing Authority workers and their clients. Consistently low wages that fail to reflect the difficult realities of living in the North have meant years of staffing shortages for the Housing Authority, causing overwork and burnout for workers and ultimately leading to poorer service for families who rely on this housing.

"Nobody wants a strike, but this employer is leaving workers, tenants, and communities in the cold," said UNW President Gayla Thunstrom. "Our members and people across the territory are demanding better housing for all, and that starts with a fair deal for workers."

The union is urging the employer to return to the bargaining table to secure a contract that addresses the key outstanding issues for members.



---

**Media Inquiries:**

Aaron Manton, Regional Political Communications Officer PSAC North - [mantona@psac-afpc.com](mailto:mantona@psac-afpc.com)

Adrienne Cartwright, Communications Officer, UNW - [pr@unw.ca](mailto:pr@unw.ca)

*PSAC North is Canada's largest union north of 60, representing more than 20,000 members in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. We support members in achieving better pay, safe working conditions, employment security, fair treatment, and respect in the workplace. Our members work for various employers, including federal, territorial, and municipal governments, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. UNW is a component of PSAC.*