



*CUPE38 Connection brings you the latest updates, collaborative events, and resources to strengthen our community.*

## Join Our Next Meeting



**Date : Tuesday, September 22, 2026**

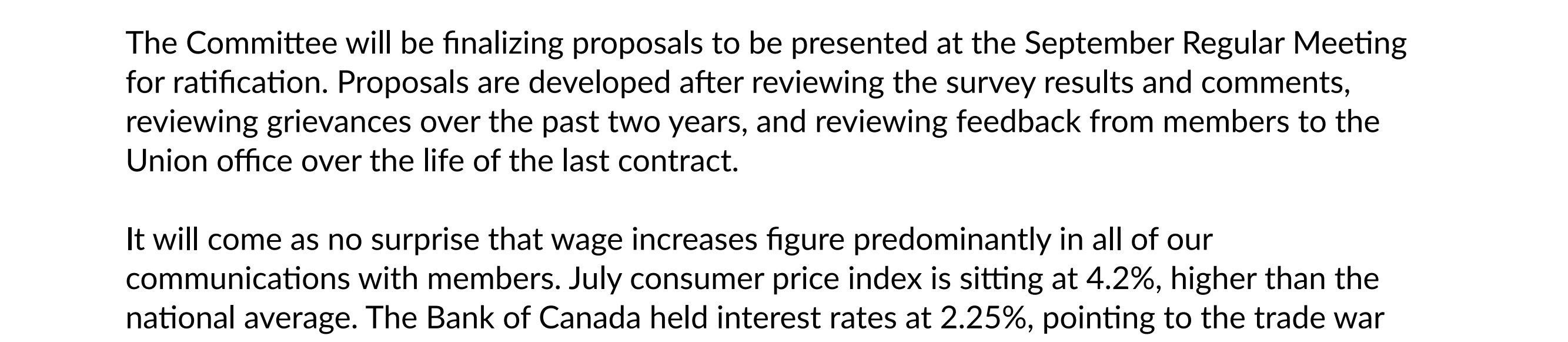
**Time: 7:00 p.m. MST**

**Location : In-person at the CUPE Local 38 office  
(1439 9 Avenue SE)**

**Agenda : Regular business**

**RSVP : [office@cupe38.org](mailto:office@cupe38.org) or call 403-233-2700**

## Bargaining Begins



At the end of the year, your collective agreement will expire. Accordingly, we will be notifying the City of our intention to negotiate a new collective agreement. The Alberta Labour Code sets out specific timelines and conditions for bargaining. Specifically, we are now entering the timeframe to serve notice to the Employer. Once we have served notice, the City and your Negotiating Committee will have a specified time to meet to exchange proposals.

Local 38 elected a Negotiating Committee in the spring, and we have spent time developing and distributing a member survey over the summer months. To date, we have received a very positive response rate from the membership.

The Committee will be finalizing proposals to be presented at the September Regular Meeting for ratification. Proposals are developed after reviewing the survey results and comments, reviewing grievances over the past two years, and reviewing feedback from members to the Union office over the life of the last contract.

It will come as no surprise that wage increases figure predominantly in all of our communications with members. July consumer price index is sitting at 4.2%, higher than the national average. The Bank of Canada held interest rates at 2.25%, pointing to the trade war with the U.S. but also noting that Canada has a strong GDP growth of 3.3%

Electricity prices continue to increase overall household costs. In fact, electricity prices are at historic levels. Food prices are escalating; energy prices are escalating; gas prices are fluctuating in response to the global crises. All of this has created massive household pressures for our members.

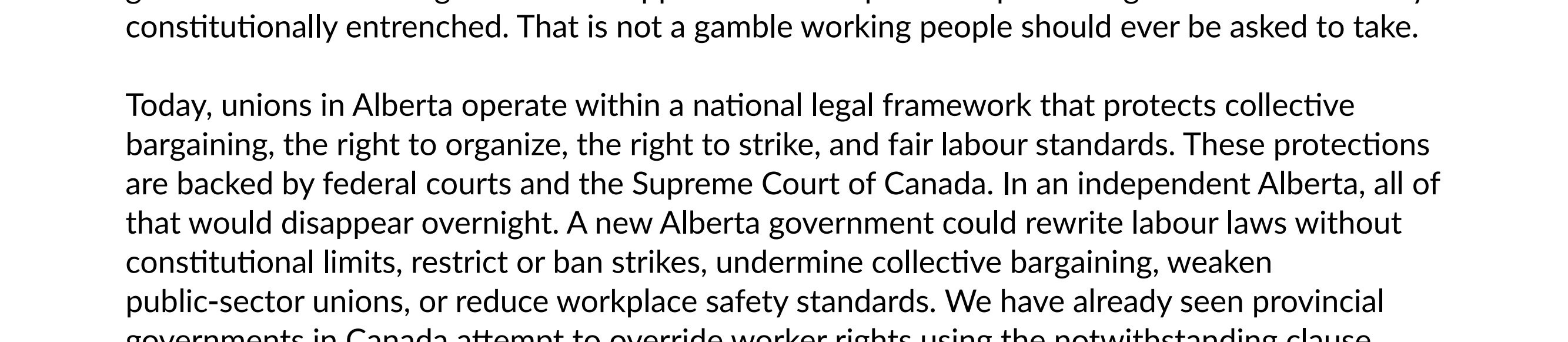
Coupled with the financial pressures, the City has not properly staffed many areas of operations. Demanding workload is the inevitable outcome of years of staffing cuts and staffing freezes. The City has returned to the treadmill approach to hiring. Instead of filling positions on a permanent basis, they try to rotate through temporary staff. Now the organization is suffering from a loss of institutional knowledge and capacity. All of these factors create increasing workload and turmoil in the organization.

The good news is that the economy has recovered over the past several years. The current global crises have inadvertently helped Alberta. Oil prices have been averaging over \$90 per barrel due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the on-going closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The Alberta budget had projected a \$9 billion deficit for 2026, but they recently announced an expected \$2 billion surplus. This is an \$11 billion shift in six months! While the U.S.-Canada trade war will undoubtedly have some impact, Alberta is situated to be buffered from the worst of the impacts.

Unions across the country are pushing back against the austerity measures. Whether it is auto workers, Federal workers, education workers, airlines, and others, workers across the country are demanding fair settlements. Our members have clearly told us that they are determined to fight for a fair and equitable settlement.

We will need members to be united behind your Negotiating Committee as we head in to this round of bargaining.

## Why Alberta Separation Harms Workers



On October 19th, Alberta is holding a referendum on our role in Canada. Consistent polling shows a vast majority of Albertans favour staying in Canada. The October 19th vote is not only a waste of money, it is playing politics with the unity of our country. There are 10 questions, of which the 10th asks if Alberta should remain in Canada. For public sector workers, the obvious answers is yes.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms remains one of the strongest legal protections available to working people. It guarantees freedom of association, which forms the constitutional foundation of union rights, as well as freedom of expression, which is essential for picketing, advocacy, and collective action. It protects mobility rights, allowing workers to move freely across provinces for employment, and equality rights, which shield workers from discrimination. These rights were not handed to us – they were won through decades of struggle. The Charter has repeatedly upheld them in landmark Supreme Court decisions affirming the right to join a union, the right to meaningful collective bargaining, and the right to strike.

If Alberta were to separate, the Charter would no longer apply unless a new Alberta constitution came to replicate it, and there is no guarantee it would. Workers would be left relying on the goodwill of whichever government happened to be in power to protect rights that are currently constitutionally entrenched. That is not a gamble working people should ever be asked to take.

Today, unions in Alberta operate within a national legal framework that protects collective bargaining, the right to organize, the right to strike, and fair labour standards. These protections are backed by federal courts and the Supreme Court of Canada. In an independent Alberta, all of that would disappear overnight. A new Alberta government could rewrite labour laws without constitutional limits, restrict or ban strikes, undermine collective bargaining, weaken public-sector unions, or reduce workplace safety standards. We have already seen provincial governments in Canada attempt to override worker rights using the notwithstanding clause. Imagine a government with no Charter to constrain it at all.

Workers also deserve stability, not a constitutional experiment. Separation would trigger years of uncertainty, including capital flight, currency instability, trade barriers, disruptions to pensions and benefits, and the loss of federal transfers that fund health care, child care, and social programs. When economies destabilize, workers pay the price through job losses, wage freezes, cuts to public services, delayed infrastructure projects, and higher borrowing costs for both government and employers. A fractured economy is a weak economy, and workers thrive only when the economy is stable, predictable, and fair.

Federal funding currently supports health care, child care, employment insurance, disaster response, infrastructure, Indigenous services, and social supports. Without these transfers, Alberta would face immediate pressure to cut services or raise taxes. Workers – especially those in public-sector jobs – would face layoffs, privatization, reduced wages, increased workloads, and longer wait times for essential services. Strong public services are the backbone of a strong labour movement, and separation would weaken both.

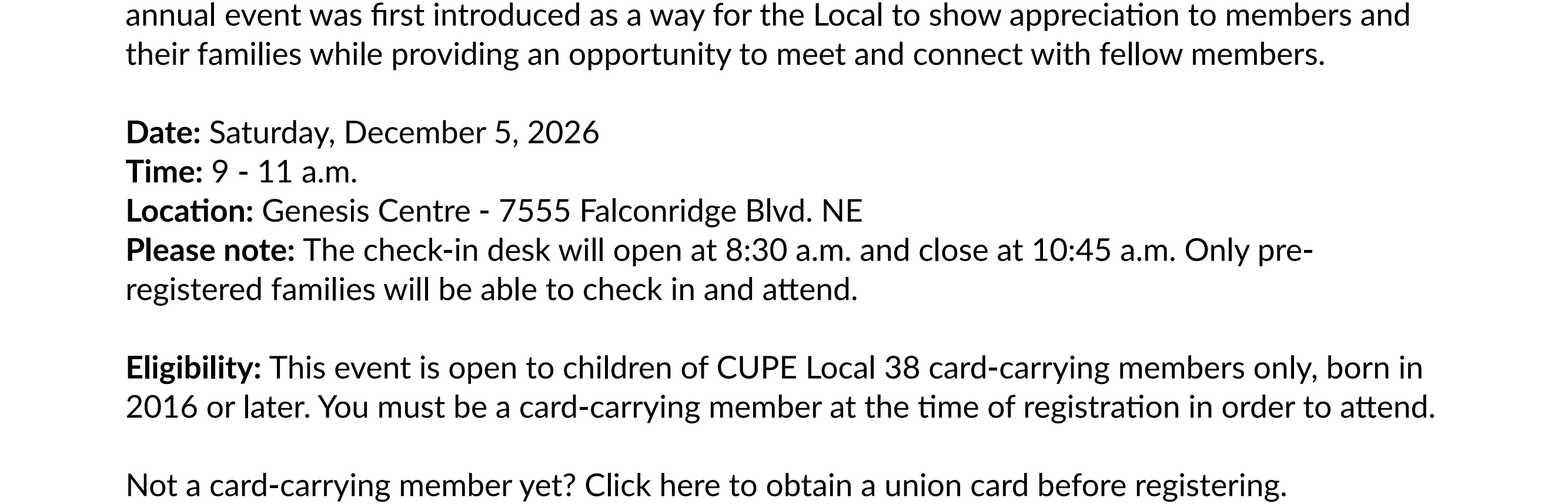
Workers win when we stand together. Across Canada, unions support each other through national bargaining strategies, coordinated campaigns, legal challenges, strike funds, and solidarity actions. Separation would isolate Alberta workers from the national labour movement at a time when solidarity is more important than ever. The challenges we face – affordability, climate transition, automation, and corporate concentration – are national and global. We need more cooperation, not less.

Separation doesn't just divide Alberta from Canada; it divides workers from each other. It shifts the conversation away from real issues like fair wages, safe workplaces, strong public services, affordable housing, and pension security, and replaces them with constitutional chaos. Workers deserve better than political distractions. We deserve a government focused on improving our lives, not tearing up the country.

Alberta separation is not a solution. It is a threat to everything workers have fought for: Charter rights, union rights, economic stability, public services, and national solidarity. The labour movement has always stood for unity, fairness, and collective strength. Separation undermines all three. Workers built this province, workers keep it running, and workers deserve a future grounded in rights, stability, and solidarity – not uncertainty and division.

The biggest danger isn't the outcome of a fair vote – it's a low turnout. Polling shows most Albertans want to stay in Canada, but polls don't cast ballots. If workers assume this referendum will fail on its own and stay home, a motivated minority could carry the day. A result built on low turnout would still be used to claim a mandate for separation, regardless of what the broader public actually believes. This is not the time to sit it out. Every union member needs to vote on October 19th – and needs to talk to coworkers, friends, and family to make sure they vote too. Complacency is the one thing that could hand separatists a win they haven't earned.

## Register Now for the 2026 Children's Christmas Party



Get ready, Santa's coming to town for the annual Children's Christmas Party! The Children's Christmas Party has been a cherished CUPE Local 38 tradition for over 25 years. This festive annual event was first introduced as a way for the Local to show appreciation to members and their families while providing an opportunity to meet and connect with fellow members.

**Date:** Saturday, December 5, 2026

**Time:** 9 - 11 a.m.

**Location:** Genesis Centre - 7555 Falconridge Blvd. NE

**Please note:** The check-in desk will open at 8:30 a.m. and close at 10:45 a.m. Only pre-registered families will be able to check in and attend.

**Eligibility:** This event is open to children of CUPE Local 38 card-carrying members only, born in 2016 or later. You must be a card-carrying member at the time of registration in order to attend.

Not a card-carrying member yet? Click [here](#) to obtain a union card before registering.

### New online registration

We're excited to introduce our new online registration system for this year's party! The new system is designed to make registration easier and more convenient for members.

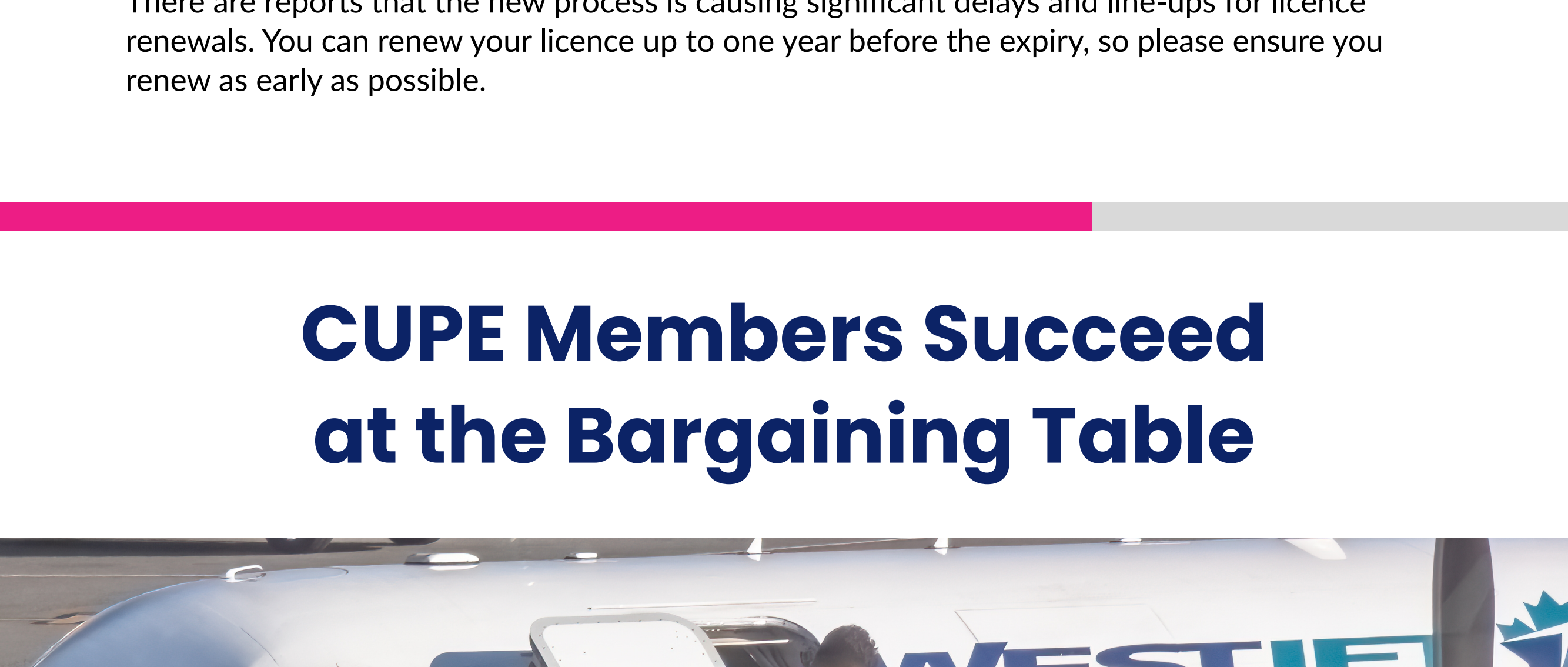
All families must pre-register online in order to attend the event and for eligible children to receive a gift. Please use the registration link below and complete the required information for your children.

As always, the Children's Christmas Party is made possible by volunteers. It's a great opportunity to get into the Christmas spirit and connect with fellow union members outside of a formal setting. If you're interested in helping out, please contact us to volunteer.

[Register for the Party](#)

[Volunteer](#)

## Reminder: Renew Your Driver's Licence!



An ongoing concern in the membership is the City's approach to expired provincial driver's licence. We have seen a modest increase in members forgetting to renew their licence prior to its expiration. The City has taken a strict position on implementing discipline when this occurs.

If your position requires that you maintain a valid provincial driver's licence, you must ensure that it is properly renewed. The province will only notify you if you voluntarily sign-up for their online email notification service. We strongly recommend you do so.

It does not matter to the City if your licence expired on your day off or while on vacation. From their perspective, the violation occurs upon the expiration of the licence. Also note that your City Operator's permit automatically expires when your provincial licence expires. It is equally important to ensure you have a valid City permit.

When a member's licence expires, and they have not operated any City equipment, they will face progressive discipline. This typically starts with a Letter of Warning. However, if there is existing discipline on the member's file, then discipline escalates to the next step.

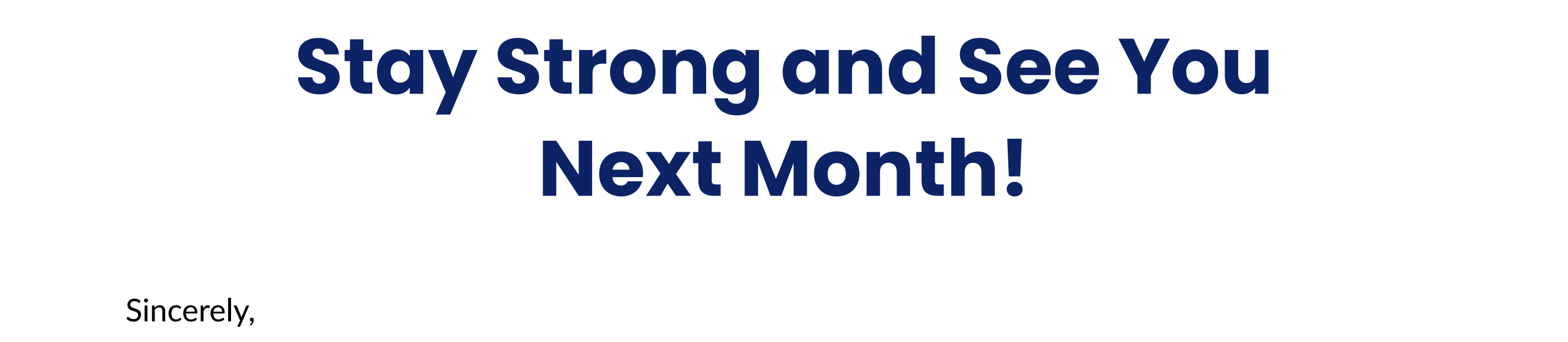
When a member's licence expires, and they operate any City equipment, they will face a significant suspension. If there is existing discipline, the member could face termination of employment.

While all City unions view this approach as overly punitive and we continue to oppose it, the City has been successful to date in implementing the discipline.

As of July 2, 2026, the province requires all renewals be done in person at a registry agent, and you must bring additional documents like proof of Canadian citizenship or immigration status and your Alberta Health Care number. You can check official details on the provincial website.

There are reports that the new process is causing significant delays and line-ups for licence renewals. You can renew your licence up to one year before the expiry, so please ensure you renew as early as possible.

## CUPE Members Succeed at the Bargaining Table



WestJet flight attendants represented by CUPE 8125 have ratified their new collective agreement, with a 90.2% vote in favour of ratification. CUPE 8125 fought a lengthy battle with the employer, WestJet, after many years of raises falling behind inflation, many hours of unpaid work, over six months without a contract, and a brief strike. The news came one year after a heated labour dispute between CUPE members and Air Canada.

By direction of Jobs Minister Paddy Haddad, the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) imposed arbitration and subsequently ordered Air Canada flight attendants back to work; CUPE challenged the unconstitutional order and vowed to continue the strike. When the CIRB declared the continued strike illegal and issued another back-to-work order on August 18, CUPE national president Mark Hancock refused to comply, saying he was prepared to face jail or fines. The next day, a tentative agreement was reached. Despite not reaching the desired outcome, CUPE members received a 12% raise in the first year and increased pay for "groundwork" that is paid at a lower rate.

CUPE 8125 stayed united in their negotiations with WestJet for fair wages and ending unpaid work, despite risks from CIRB and federal ministers. "This is a strong mandate from our members and recognition of the meaningful gains we made at the bargaining table," CUPE 8125 president Alia Hussain said in a news release. "This is only our second contract and we made important progress, including making sure our members are compensated for more of the work they already do."

CUPE members negotiated retroactive wage increase of 13% effective in October and a 2.5% annual raise over the next three years, along with a new duty pay premium to address unpaid "groundwork" – equivalent to another 12% salary bump.

This success goes to show the power of workers' solidarity and unity. "Our bargaining committee worked hard to make these gains possible, and our members stood together throughout this process," Hussain said. "That solidarity made a difference."

CUPE will continue to represent workers and fight to preserve our constitutional rights to collective bargaining, ensuring free and fair negotiations. CUPE members have stood up to airlines and demonstrated that unpaid work won't fly.

## Stay Strong and See You Next Month!

Sincerely,

Your Executive Team



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