

## **Union Welcome Package**

Welcome to the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 2137, the Union that represents persons employed as full-time and part-time employees with JVS Toronto.

The CUPE Local 2137 Welcome Package includes a number of documents and links helpful to all new members of our local and CUPE in general.

It includes:

- Information about CUPE Local 2137's 2018-2021 Collective Agreement
- Information about CUPE Local 2137 Bylaws
- Selected Benefits and Rights You Should Know About
- List of Executive Board Members
- CUPE Local 2137 FAQs
- Contact information

## **CUPE Local 2137 Collective Agreement**

The Collective Agreement is the contract between the union as bargaining agent and your employer. It covers such issues as wages, working conditions, benefits, rights, and procedures to be followed in settling disputes. Members are strongly encouraged to read their Collective Agreement. If you have trouble understanding anything in your Collective Agreement, your Steward(s) would be more than happy to assist you. You can also contact the Executive if a Steward is unavailable.

Here are some examples of what you'll find in your Collective Agreement:

- Details of hiring process
- Details of sick pay/benefits
- Details of vacation and vacation pay
- Calculation of seniority
- Conditions for leaves of absence
- Grievance procedures

## **CUPE Local 2137 Bylaws**

CUPE Local 2137 is governed by CUPE Ontario Constitution and CUPE National Constitution, and operates within the guidelines set out in the Bylaws.

Here are some examples of what you'll find in your Bylaws:

- Membership Meetings
- Executive Board
- Nomination, Election, and Installation of Officers
- Fees, Dues, and Assessments

## **Selected Rights and Benefits You Should Know About**

**Leaves:** You are entitled to a number of paid, partially paid and unpaid leaves, including sick leave, compassionate leave, and pregnancy/parental/paternal leaves. Details of these can be found on pages 38-45 of the Collective Agreement.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** You have the right to access the JVS Toronto's EAP (LifeBalance) should you have personal difficulties (including physical, mental, emotional, marital, family, alcohol, drug, or financial problems), and seek support and assistance. The EAP offers a free confidential and professional counselling service and can be reached at 1-877-630-6701.

**Progressive Discipline:** You have the right to be informed of any problems regarding your work performance and must be given the opportunity to respond to and address any problems raised. You have the right to Union representation in any disciplinary meeting.

**Grievances:** Every employee has the right to file a grievance if they believe that the Collective Agreement has been ignored or if they wish clarification on a workplace situation. The grievance procedure is there to allow you to question the way the Collective Agreement is being administered. All enquiries are held in strict confidence and we will not file a grievance without your explicit consent. Many issues can be resolved without the initiation of a formal grievance. Please contact the Union with any concerns. (See Article 8 of the Collective Agreement.)

## **List of Executive Board Members (CUPE Local 2137)**

**Acting-President:** Demetra Nikolakakos (cupe2137@gmail.com)

**Vice-President:** Jackie Gilhooley (jgilhooley@rocketmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Adrienne Simmons (2137treasurerjvs@gmail.com)

**Recording Secretary:** Marcia Parkinson (marciap99@gmail.com)

### **Stewards:**

- **Jane/Finch** - Jas Grewal (jasgobindgrewal@hotmail.com)
- **Scarborough** – VACANT
- **Albion** – VACANT
- **Tycos** – VACANT
- **Markham** - Tim Greenwood (timhgreenwood@gmail.com)
- **Toronto North** - VACANT
- **Toronto Centre** - Rubaica Fidvi (rsf78@hotmail.com)
- **Floater** - Fred Mayr (friedwolf@yahoo.com)

### **Trustees (3):**

- Tosin Adekanmbi (tosin.tolu@gmail.com)
- Marcia Parkinson (marciap99@gmail.com)
- VACANT

**At present, CUPE Local 2137 does not have the roles of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, Chief Steward and Outreach Membership Officer as part of its Executive Board.**

## **Providing the union with your personal email address**

### **Why do I need to use a non-JVS Toronto email address to get union updates?**

There are a couple of reasons:

- It's more confidential, as the employer has access to all the emails you send with their email service.
- If we ever need to go on strike we need to have a way to communicate with each other that we have control over. If we rely on the email service the employer provides, it may become harder for us to organize.
- Simply put, JVS Toronto emails should be used for JVS Toronto business.

## **CUPE Local 2137 FAQs**

### **What does it cost?**

Running a union does cost money. We pay legal fees, particularly for representing members through the grievance and arbitration process; set aside funds to provide our members with strike pay, in the event of a strike or lockout; and mail information to our members. We also contribute financially to CUPE National and CUPE Ontario.

As a member of a CUPE 2137, 1.5% of your salary will be deducted for Union dues. You never have to write us a cheque – your dues come directly off your pay in the same way as CPP and EI premiums are collected.

It is also important to know that the union is not an organization you pay to do things for you; it is not the same as a lawyer or a real estate agent or similar professional. The union can act on your behalf, but the union is only as strong as its members. The dues provide infrastructure and resources that can help you organize around what you and your fellow members want. The real power of a union is people working together as a group to advocate.

### **How does CUPE Local 2137 work?**

CUPE Local 2137 is run by the members for the members. It is a democratic organization. The Executive of CUPE Local 2137, which makes the day-to-day decisions, is elected through a vote of the membership every two years. Major decisions, such as whether to accept a union contract, called a Collective Agreement, are made directly by a vote of the membership. The Executive Board consists of four (4) officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and Recording Secretary. The Executive Board meets every month and their recommendations are forwarded to the General Membership meetings.

There are various ways members can participate in the union. Members volunteer to serve on committees, including the Health and Safety Committee. We also have members who serve as union Stewards. CUPE Local 2137 has four (4) active Stewards. Stewards stand as the first line of defence when a problem occurs. A Steward is the person to see when you have questions about your rights or questions about the union.

We also have regular labour-management meetings where issues outside the contract are resolved. As a labour-management committee member, you would canvass other members regarding issues of concern. Members can also participate in CUPE Local 2137 by attending the regular membership meetings which are usually held every other month, at any current JVS location as determined by the Executive, with the permission of management, at 5:30 p.m. Notice of each regular meeting will be given to members at least seven (7) days in advance.

Please contact the Union if you would like to become a Union Steward or join the Union committees.

### **SOME QUOTATIONS IN THE SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY!**

“In contrast to the cutthroat competition and dog-eat-dog individualism that capitalism cherishes, unions are based on the idea that one's own well-being is bound up with the fate of others. Collective action depends on trust and a strong sense of shared interest, ideals that underlie democracy.”

- **Lois Weiner**

“Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day.”

- **A. J. Cook**

“Labor Unions are the leading force for democratization and progress.”

- **Noam Chomsky**

“How many teamsters does it take to screw in a light bulb? Fifteen. You got a problem with that?”

- **William Novak & Moshe Waldoks**

### **CONTACT US**

This Welcome Package is intended as a brief introduction to CUPE Local 2137. If you have any questions or comments, please talk to your Steward(s) or contact us directly at:

[cupe2137@gmail.com](mailto:cupe2137@gmail.com)

***Welcome to Local CUPE 2137!***