

BARGAINING REPORT

Highlights of the tentative agreement between Local 597 and Dominion



New agreement helps secure full-time jobs

**Message from Jerry Dias,
Unifor National President**

Over past years, retail workers have faced increased difficulties including low-wages, few benefits and the elimination of full-time

jobs with a rise in the overuse of part-time positions. This year you also faced COVID-19. First serving your communities as Canadians raced to grocery stores to stock up in preparation of pandemic lockdowns, and then maintaining the frontline as the battle against the virus continues.

Grocery workers did not become essential because of the pandemic. COVID-19 just made obvious the vital role of retail workers.

For too long grocery giants have eroded full-time work and benefits. This collective agreement takes key steps towards securing full-time jobs now and in the future.

Unifor has been vocal in drawing attention to the actions of the grocery chains. Recently I appeared before MPs to call out employers on allegations of collusion on retail workers' pay and the union has launched a national campaign to raise the awareness about the treatment of retail workers by virtually all retail giants.

Retail is Canada's single biggest employment sector, and the quality of jobs matters.

Unifor was built to take on tough issues like those plaguing retail workers in Canada.

Today, that momentum continues. This agreement represents the best language we have seen to date in the industry protecting full-time employment. There is no question we have to continue our work to raise the wages of retail workers.

I am proud of the Bargaining Committee and the leadership of Local 597. You have addressed many of the priorities of the membership, but we have a lot of work to do as we try to turn around decades of abuse by retail corporations in Canada.

I join your committee in recommending this tentative agreement for your approval.

Jerry Dias
Unifor National President

HIGHLIGHTS

Adds full-time positions back to bargaining unit

Stops the erosion of full-time jobs

Pathway to full-time jobs for part-time workers

New minimum wage plus scale

Wage increases



New gains achieved in difficult negotiations

**Message from Carolyn Wrice,
President of Local 597**

We entered this round of bargaining knowing negotiations would be tough but the Bargaining Committee

remained determined to add full-time jobs back into our bargaining unit and to halt further erosion of full-time jobs. This agreement includes provisions to address both those issues.

These negotiations took us to the brink of a strike, averted by last minute movement by the company on several key issues.

This agreement looks to create a more stable future with unprecedented language to commit to a set percentage of full-time bargaining hours worked without the reduction of part-time work. Paired with a path to move part-time positions to full-time this contract moves to decrease precarious work.

It is true that the Committee did not get everything that we wanted and I know there will be some disappointment, particularly on the wage front. The COVID-19 pandemic has reset our expectations. Nevertheless, the wage gains we made are in line with our last contract, and all are added to our base rates of pay. Nearly half of the increases are front-loaded in year 1, which means more money in our members' pockets over the life of the contract. Further, the inclusion of new Minimum Wage Plus provisions for Part-Time, is groundbreaking for us.

I thank the Bargaining Committee for their hard work and join in recommending this tentative agreement for approval.

Carolyn Wrice
President of Local 597

Unifor-Dominion Stores Bargaining Highlights

FULL-TIME JOBS

Entering this round of contract negotiations, members in the bargaining unit delivered a mandate to secure and promote full-time job opportunities across Dominion Stores. The urgency of this follows the employer's decision to cut dozens of full-time jobs from our Newfoundland stores. The committee approached this objective in three specific ways:

- Regain as many full-time positions as possible during negotiations.
- Develop a mechanism that prevents further full-time job reductions.
- Ensure a pathway from part-time to full-time when warranted in stores.

Adds 22 full-time jobs

The Company agrees to the following new full-time positions:

- Within 60 days of ratification, the company will post 11 full-time Grocery Store Clerks.
- Within sixty 60 days of ratification, the company will post eleven 11 full-time Back Door Receivers.
- Note: newly hired full-time Grocery Store Clerks and Back Door Receivers may be scheduled in more than one department/area and may perform work in multiple department(s) / area(s) on a daily, weekly or other rotational basis on any shift (day, afternoon, night). Despite this, all members remain protected by scheduling provisions established in the collective agreement.

Halt to reduction of full-time hours

The Company commits to maintain a minimum 20% of total bargaining unit hours worked for Dominion as full-time hours worked. Calculations will be done twice each year, in consultation with the union. If full-time work hours fall below the 20% threshold, the Employer must post new full-time jobs to ensure compliance.

The Company may not reduce part-time work hours to meet this commitment.

Progression path for part-time employees to be reclassified as full-time

The Company must now post a new full-time job if a part-time worker works an average of 40 hours per week for 13 consecutive weeks, for reasons other than outlined in the collective agreement.

WAGES

Wage increases - Full time

Wages for full-time workers, at the end rate of pay, will increase by \$1.00 per hour over the life of the agreement. The increases will be as follows:

- 45¢ per hour in Year 1
- 35¢ per hour in Year 2
- 20¢ per hour in Year 3

Start rates for full-time workers will increase between \$1.00-\$1.50 per hour, to at least \$15 per hour.

The "6 month" interval in the full-time wage scale is removed, but the scale length remains at 2 years.

Wage increases - Part time

Wages for part-time workers, at the end rate of pay, will increase by \$1.00 per hour over the life of the agreement. The increases will be as follows:

- 45¢ per hour in Year 1
- 35¢ per hour in Year 2
- 20¢ per hour in Year 3

FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME WAGE INCREASES (END RATES)

Year 1 (2020) 45¢	Year 2 (2021) 35¢	Year 3 (2022) 20¢
30¢ upon ratification, paid retroactively to October 28, 2019	20¢ April 28	20¢ April 28
15¢ October 28	15¢ October 28	End of contract October 28

NEW PART-TIME PAY SCALE

Minimum Wage Plus

Wages for all 'in-scale' part-time workers will automatically adjust based on future changes to the minimum wage. Minimum Wage Plus does not apply to the end rates of pay.

Time worked	Current pay	New scale	Actual pay upon ratification	Actual pay when min. wage @ \$12.65
start to 500 hours worked	\$11.65	MW	\$11.65	\$12.65
501 to 1,000 hours worked	\$11.65	MW + \$0.05	\$11.70	\$12.70
1,001 to 1,500 hours worked	\$11.65	MW + \$0.10	\$11.75	\$12.75
1,501 to 2,000 hours worked	\$11.65	MW + \$0.20	\$11.85	\$12.85
3 years of service or 2,001 hours worked	\$11.70	MW + \$0.40	\$12.05	\$13.05
+12 months of service	\$11.70	MW + \$0.50	\$12.15	\$13.15
+12 months of service	\$12.20	MW + \$0.60	\$12.25	\$13.25
+12 months of service	\$14.10	\$14.40 End rate of \$14.40 will increase to \$15.10 over the lifetime of the agreement		

Note: Minimum Wage Plus does not apply to in-scale Meat Cutters, Florists or Pharmacy Assistants, although in-scale rates for these workers will rise between 90¢ and \$2.70 over the life of the agreement.

Part-time workers not at the end rate as of the date of ratification will slot into the new part-time wage progression based upon their hours worked or length of service and will receive the following one-time payments (in lieu of retroactivity pay):

- \$150 - Part-time employees, not at end rate, with more than two years of service on the date of ratification.
- \$100 - Part-time employees, not at end rate, with less than two years of service on the date of ratification.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Union grievances

All outstanding grievances on the matter of full-time jobs are withdrawn.

Layoffs and promotion

For purposes of layoff and promotions, seniority shall be recognized by the Company and shall be based on the length of continuous full-time service and part-time service.

New layoff procedure

Full-time employees who are laid off may elect to displace the most junior full-time employee: in their department (in their store or in their region) in a position that is either equal to or lower rated provided they have the necessary ability and qualifications to perform the work.

Expanded safety shoe allowance

The safety shoe allowance increases from \$75.00 to \$85.00.

Two-week rolling schedules

The practice of posting two week rolling schedule of hours by 12 noon on Thursday of the prior week is now included in the collective agreement.

Obligation to fill temporary full-time job vacancies removed

The company no longer has an obligation to fill a temporary full-time job vacancy, in excess of 45 days, resulting from illness, injury or leave of absence.

This tentative agreement addresses a number of our key priorities. Your Unifor Bargaining Committee has negotiated an agreement that adds full-time positions, secures full-time work for the future, and creates a process for part-time workers to move to full-time. The Committee recognizes the shortcomings in this agreement but on the whole is recommending acceptance based on the improvements in this contract.