



# News Release

For Immediate Release

## **Teamsters Local Union 855 – Health Care Division poised to start vote on job action with provinces largest provider of ambulance services in rural Newfoundland and Labrador**

(19 MAY 2021, ST. JOHN'S, NL) Paramedics, Emergency Medical Responders and Dispatchers employed with the largest private employer providing ambulance services in our province are set to take a vote on targeted job action. Teamsters Local Union 855 is disappointed that negotiations have broken down leaving our members with no choice but to take this step.

Wages are a priority for these employees. They make considerably less than similar employees in this province, they have not seen a pay increase since 2014, until they unionized at which time a 2% increase was earned in negotiation, to which the employer is now trying to claw back in these negotiations. Employees are also seeking retro-active payments similar to those the employer received in the new Ambulance Service Agreement. Employees are also seeking a retirement package, so they can retire with dignity after a lifetime of service to the people of our province.

Employees are also seeking overtime payments. Employees with these services work for half their lives, as per the terms of the Ambulance Service Agreement between the Provincial Government and the employer they are compensated for 11.43 hours/day, despite having to work multiple, consecutive 24-hour shifts. They are only compensated for less than half of the time they are expected to be ready to respond. The employer also feels it is fair for them to volunteer their time if they are required to work past their scheduled time off, despite the fact that the employer receives significant compensation from the Provincial Government for the employees to do their jobs. We need to be clear that our negotiations are with the employer and not the province. We are not seeking financial intervention from the province; the province has already reached a deal with the private operators for providing these services.

Long shifts and extra demands placed on these employees, due to staff shortages, are take their toll. The members are also seeking better fatigue management programs to address safety concerns caused by the current situation.

Teamsters Local 855 does, however, appeal to the government to intervene and help these dedicated emergency personnel reach an amicable agreement.

If the employees vote in favor of job action, represented private ambulance services from Central and Eastern Health regions will be affected. Services affected are

1. 13910 Newfoundland and Labrador Ltd. (Conception Bay South and Holyrood);
2. Ferryland Emergency Services Limited;
3. Fewer's Ambulance Services Limited (Arnold's Cove, Bonavista/Catalina, Clarenville, Lethbridge, Port Rexton and Terrenceville);



4. Gambo Ambulance Service Limited;
5. Mercer's Ambulance Service Limited (Boyd's Cove, Carmanville and Fogo Island);
6. Ryan's Ambulance Service (Trepassey) and
7. Tremblett's Ambulance Service (Bell Island).

The union is currently working on a Required Ambulance Service Agreement (RASA), which will dictate service levels during a possible job action.

At this time the union anticipates that there will be no loss of emergency services and residents in affected areas are still encouraged to call 911 or their local emergency number if they feel they need an ambulance for an emergency, an emergency ambulance will be there for you and our communities.

Residents requiring ambulances for non-emergency transfers may notice an increase in wait times at hospitals and care facilities, as these services, if available, maybe provided by ambulances from other service areas.

We feel it is prudent to let the residents in our rural areas of the province know that there could be changes to your ambulance services in the next couple of weeks.

Teamsters Local 855 remains committed to reaching an agreement with the employer in the coming days. The current collective agreement expired March 31, 2019 for Mercer's Ambulance Service and March 31, 2020 for the remainder of the listed ambulance services.

Teamsters Local 855 is the union representing the largest group of private ambulance service workers in our province representing some 200 Paramedics, EMR's and Dispatchers at 10 private ambulance services in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION FOR TEAMSTERS

Hubert Dawe, Business Agent – Health Care Division, Teamsters Union Local 855,

Cell: (709) 727-0610

email: [hdawe@teamstersl855.com](mailto:hdawe@teamstersl855.com)



#### **Teamsters Local 855**

70 Mews Place  
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Phone: 709-579-5706  
Cell: 709-682-0012  
Email: [rgill@teamstersL855.com](mailto:rgill@teamstersL855.com)