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CONSIDER BECOMING A HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

It is now possible for CUPW members to become a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) in Canada Post offices with fewer than 20 employees. Under an agreement reached between the CPAA and CUPW in March 2009, and renewed in each subsequent term, the parties negotiated an election process for two-year terms, as required by the *Canada Labour Code*.

However, given the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and following joint discussions, the process was postponed by one year. The current term will end in mid-June 2021. HSRs must be chosen by all employees in the office in question.

The duties of HSRs are outlined in Section 136 of the *Code*. HSRs must, among other things:

- consider and expeditiously resolve complaints relating to the health and safety of employees;
- ensure that adequate records are maintained pertaining to work accidents, injuries, health hazards and the disposition of complaints;
- meet with the employer as necessary to address health and safety matters;
- participate in all of the inquiries, investigations, studies and inspections pertaining to the health and safety of employees;
- inspect each month all or part of the work place, so that every part of the work place is inspected at least once each year;
- assist the employer in investigating and assessing the exposure of employees to hazardous substances.

It should also be noted that HSRs shall not be subjected to intimidation nor retaliation while performing their duties.

Health and Safety Representatives obtain self-directed training from Canada Post representing about two days of work, and are compensated in accordance with the collective agreement.

In offices where CUPW members work alongside APOC members, CUPW members interested in becoming an HSR must forward their name to the CUPW Local President, who will forward this information to their Regional Education and Organization Officer (REOO). REOOs are the representatives in charge of this matter. Since APOC members are considered management employees, and therefore cannot represent employees, **CUPW candidates will be automatically elected.**

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In offices where CUPW members work alongside CPAA members, the situation is different, since these members are considered employees. In discussions held at the national level between our two unions, CPAA informed us that its representatives wanted to act as HSRs in all offices where members of the two unions work together. Following these discussions, both organizations agreed on an election process and guidelines for those offices where CUPW members are interested in becoming HSRs. If CUPW members put their name forward, an election for the position of HSR will be held in these offices.

We strongly encourage CUPW members to become HSRs, as we know their work experience and expertise will enable them to effectively perform the duties of the position. All CUPW members who are regular employees (full-time or part-time) can put their name forward. If you are interested in becoming an HSR, contact your local. The deadline is May 2, 2021. Please note that in those offices where no CUPW member has put their name forward, all employees (both CUPW and CPAA members) will be represented by a CPAA member.

In closing, we thank all CUPW members who may apply for this position. The more members who show interest in the position, the more we will be able to ensure that CUPW members have someone to guide and assist them in resolving health and safety issues wherever they work.

In solidarity,



Marc Roussel
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Health and Safety

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