



WHY IS MY PAYCHEQUE SO LOW?

York has made unilateral changes to how you are paid and violated the very principle of collective bargaining!

PAST PRACTICE (GIA)

- Grant-in-Aid was paid on the same monthly paycheque as your TA salary.
- GIA was never taxed or considered wages.

WHAT YORK IS DOING (SGA)

- York has decided to deposit GIA into your student account under the new name Supplemental Graduate Assistance (SGA).

WHY DOES IT MATTER?



When York sent copies of the 2017-2020 collective agreement to the union for review we discovered they put in a whole new Article! This article wasn't agreed to in bargaining and it wasn't part of the arbitrated settlement after the strike. This violates the very principle of collective bargaining and accepting it would set an inexpressibly dangerous precedent.

York has said that members will receive SGA monthly "on or about" the 25th of the month and members who have signed up for EFT (electronic fund transfer) should have the amount automatically refunded. But because York is imposing this change without our consent we really only have their word on it.

Significantly, the language York proposed for the new Article is vague. It offers no explicit protections against the SGA being used to pay tuition or existing debts within the student account and the language would also allow for payments to be made once a term, instead of once a month. History has taught us that language must be airtight or else there is no guarantee York will not turn on the commitments they made.

Refund requests from Student Accounts are also notoriously slow and the Article provides no guarantees around when the SGA refunds must be cleared. Ultimately, members risk losing the financial freedom to choose how to use their income and when.

HAVE YORK'S CHANGES LEFT YOU STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY?

Even if York automatically refunds SGA once its been applied to student accounts there may be significant delays in members receiving their money. This could mean members are unable to pay their rent and other bills, an issue we have repeatedly raised with York.

If York's change to the GIA payment structure has left you struggling to pay your bills or rent we encourage you to apply for the Ways and Means Fund. Ways and Means is available to CUPE 3903 members to help cover unexpected financial hardships. For more information see: 3903.cupe.ca/ways-and-means-fund



WHY IS YORK DOING THIS?

York claims that the Canadian Revenue Agency may tax GIA if it continues to be part of your paycheque. However, the CRA has not contacted York about the GIA. York insists they are acting proactively by imposing this change to SGA. York has only recently provided the union with information that allows us to seek our own legal opinion despite being asked for it months ago.



CAN CHANGES LIKE THIS BE MADE OUTSIDE OF BARGAINING?

Yes, but not without consent of the membership. But instead of going through the proper procedures York lied to us about the changes being part of the arbitrator's settlement (they weren't), then didn't respond to our communications, and only recently provided us with information to support their justification.

The union expressed a willingness to cooperate with the employer on these changes if there was a compelling reason to do so. This offer of cooperation has effectively been rejected by the decision to move forward with unilateral changes.

York has again shown their disdain for collective bargaining and how hollow their 'desire' for better labour relations really is.

WHAT IS THE LOCAL DOING?

We have filed a grievance at Step 4, contesting these unilateral changes. Additionally, as per the arbitrated settlement, the arbitrator remains seized in any dispute regarding his award until a collective agreement is agreed to. If York continues to claim this new Article was part of the 2018 arbitrator's award then we will be taking this directly to the arbitrator for resolution.

As more information becomes available, the Local will ensure members are adequately informed about how to best navigate this sudden change to the funding structure.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We're asking members to keep us informed of how York is implementing this change, and its impact on you.

Check your student account, especially around the regular pay day of the 25th. If your SGA was not deposited in your student account by the 25th, if it was in the wrong amount, if it was used to offset student debts instead of refunded, if you had to request a refund instead of it being automatic, or if you had any other issues please let us know.

Please fill in the jotform on the website below with any issues, you can also contact your departmental Steward, the Chief Steward for your Unit or a Staff Representative for further support.

For further information, go to:
3903.cupe.ca/what-you-really-need-to-know-about-gia/