



**Canadian Union of  
Public Employees**

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*Bridgepoint Hospital*  
- Nurses & Paramedical  
Units  
- Service Units

*City of Toronto*  
- Full-Time  
- Long-Term Care Homes  
& Services Part-Time  
- Recreation Workers  
Part-Time  
- Unit B Part-Time

*Toronto Community  
Housing Corporation*

July 3, 2013

Mayor Rob Ford and Members of the Executive Committee  
10<sup>th</sup> floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford and Members of the Executive Committee:

**RE: EX 33.2 - Quality Jobs, Living Wages and Fair Wages in Toronto**

Local 79 represents approximately 20,000 employees in the City of Toronto delivering a wide range of services including cleaning in many of the City's facilities.

Updating the City's Fair Wage Policy is long overdue – by a decade. During those ten years some wages have fallen more than 20% behind basic market standards. Some shocking facts emerge from this stagnant fair wage period. For instance the wage for light duty cleaners is 40 cents below the Minimum Wage in Ontario.

Local 79 is hopeful that the staff recommended creation of a “quality job assessment tool” will help the City take a more proactive approach. Toronto's Fair Wage Policy *only* establishes that contractors pay employees a basic market rate. It does not guarantee that it will be a decent wage, and it does not guarantee that employees will receive stable, full-time work.

The cleaning industry is notorious for unstable, low-wage, part-time, temporary jobs. The City needs a tool that looks at a job's quality, bearing in mind that families are trying to live, not just survive, on these wages.

It *is* about supporting living wages in Toronto, which, according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, is closer to seventeen dollars (\$17) per hour than the twelve dollars (\$12) per hour stated in the Fair Wage Policy. But a good hourly wage means a lot less to someone if they do not know how many hours they will work each week. It is difficult make sure your bills are paid when you do not know how much money you are going to make.

The City needs a tool that helps it measure the quality of a job in terms of its stability and security. The United Way and McMaster University released a report a couple of months ago showing that half of Toronto's working population have precarious employment, a large part of which is driven by a lack of stable, secure jobs.

For those in the cleaning sector, precarious employment has been a long-standing condition. They are often on call, meaning they cannot make commitments to other jobs, but have no control over how many hours they will work. The jobs are often temporary or on contract so they have no employment security, and very little protection under the *Employment Standards Act*.

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MEMBERS  
SINCE  
1942**

Local 79 is willing to work with the City to help create what staff have called a “job quality assessment tool” to ensure that whether you work for the City, or work for a company contracted by the City, you have a quality job you can count on.

As part of that assessment tool, we would like to find a way to reflect the cost of contracting-out services when it fuels the creation of low-wage, low quality jobs.

Toronto is facing a crisis brought on by the increase of low-wage, low-quality jobs. The Staff Report states that, according to the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC), Toronto is experiencing the fastest decline in quality jobs in the Province.

The Toronto Community Foundation's Vital Signs report in 2012 found that Toronto is the least equitable city in Canada, and that by 2025 almost sixty percent of Toronto neighbourhoods will be low income.

The steep rise in low-wage, low-quality jobs means more and more people will need additional supports and services to make ends meet. City services such as Public Health, Employment and Social Services, Recreation, Housing, and Childcare will be more heavily burdened, and that comes at a cost. Outsourcing decisions made to save money miss part of the equation when they do not take *these* costs into account.

Last year, the City contracted-out cleaning in its police stations. Information Local 79 has gathered shows that the quality of service has been questionable, and that light-duty cleaners hired under the contract may be getting as little as ten dollars and sixty cents (\$10.60) an hour.

If those cleaners are fortunate enough to be full-time, they are making twenty-two thousand dollars (\$22,000) a year, which is the Low-Income Cut-Off for an individual living in Toronto. If that worker has a child or other dependent they are earning below the Low-Income Cut-Off.

Toronto City Council was trying to avoid this kind of outcome when it put a higher level of scrutiny on proposals to contract-out cleaning jobs. We believe that City Council should put a moratorium on any outsourcing proposals that could lead to low-wage jobs until the “job quality assessment tool” is in place to assure that good jobs do not get replaced by poverty jobs.

At the very least, City Council must maintain its oversight of any outsourcing proposals for cleaning jobs until staff define what a good-quality job is, and how the City can better evaluate outsourcing proposals in terms of supporting good quality jobs.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Maguire', written in a cursive style.

Tim Maguire  
President