

ACTING PRESIDENT DONNA HOKIRO: "TAKE THE USW – TELUS BARGAINING SURVEY"

"The USW 1944 - Telus collective agreement will expire by the end of next year, which could seem like a relatively long time but really, the clock is ticking. Make no mistake 2021 will be a monumental round of bargaining that will have enormous impact on your career at Telus.

YOU are the Union, and neither the Bargaining Committee, the leadership nor the Local staff can take up the role that YOU have to play:

Make your voice heard
Be active
Get involved

Every member at Telus must participate actively throughout this round of bargaining, not because the Union asks for it, but because there's no other way. Apathy won't let us win this time, it never has.

We all know too well the realities of today's labour market, made worse by the pandemic: Telus and other multimillion-dollar companies downsize, outsource, all the while knowing that the uncertainty of the future makes it easier for them to use discipline and to micro manage. All the while making sure, in the most despicable ways, that their employees are too busy making ends meet and dealing with stress and burnout to fight for their rights nor to demand benefits. Telus is counting on you not to care, and to do nothing.

The [2021 Telus / USW Collective Bargaining survey](#) is the very first step to prepare for the many battles ahead. The Bargaining Committee will build YOUR bargaining package around YOUR answers. Your answers to this survey will help us work together to build YOUR future. The survey will be available online until December 20th." – *Acting President Donna Hokiro*

LUDM DELEGATES AND USW – TELUS BARGAINING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTION RESULTS

As announced on November 23rd, 2020, the list of Delegates to the 2021 Local Union Delegated Meeting and the members of the USW – Telus Bargaining Committee have been ratified by Local 1944 Administrator Omero Landi.

Thank you to all who stepped up to play an active role within the Local Union.

Congratulations to all [Bargaining Committee members, Delegates and Alternate Delegates](#).

Stay tuned for future information on the newly formed USW Local 1944 – Telus Bargaining Committee.

To make sure you get the latest news, [subscribe](#) to our newsletters, [sign up](#) for text messages, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @usw1944.

[See the Election results here](#)

2021 TELUS / USW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SURVEY

<https://1944.fyi/2021-bargaining-survey> 

Your feedback is vital.

Please ensure you are completing the survey on your own time and not company paid time.

WOMEN OF STEEL

DISCOVER AND GET INVOLVED IN THE NEW USW CAMPAIGN: RAISING THE BAR ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

On October 28, 2020, the United Steelworkers launched a new campaign, Raising the Bar on Women's Health and Safety. This was an important conversation with USW activists on how union members can best amplify women's voices in the workplace. Acting President Donna Hokiro, as a member of the USW National Women's Committee, was a panelist to this online event.

"We're hoping that all Steelworkers will get involved in this campaign," said Acting President Donna Hokiro. "We want you to learn more about women's health and safety issues, and treat women's health and safety issues as core USW health and safety issues. We hope to get more women involved in health and safety activism such as by electing or appointing women to health and safety committees, and sending women to USW courses. Additionally, listen with respect to women's voices and ideas about how to make the workplace safer, and healthier."

READ THE USW ACTION GUIDE FOR RAISING THE BAR ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

"The Action Guide has sections on key health and safety issues for women, such as toilets and change rooms, pregnancy and breast-feeding, menopause, personal protective equipment, and violence and harassment," said Acting President Donna Hokiro. "The Action Guide describes how these issues affect women differently from men. It gives some ideas for how to take action, and provides resource links if you want to learn more."

[Download the Action Guide here.](#)

[Sign up to receive updates and resources from the Raising the Bar on Women's Health and Safety campaign](#)



From left to right, top to bottom: Adriane Paavo, National Education and Equality Department Leader; Alexandra Eshelman, Administrative Assistant to the National Director and webconference moderator; Ken Neumann, National Director for Canada; Caroline Demers, member of Local 1210 and of the National Women's Committee; Veronica Tanner, Executive Assistance of USW Local 1-405 and Chair of the National Women's Committee; Shannon Devine, Department Leader of the New Media & Information Technology Department; Donna Hokiro, Acting President and member of the National Women's Committee; and Isabelle Bournival, member of Local 3953 and member of the National, Health, Safety and Environment Committee. Special mention goes to Dhanajai (DJ) Kohli from New Media and IT — our tech guru for the night, and Brain Bickford who provided exceptional translation for the event switching flawlessly between English and French.

WOMEN OF STEEL

MORE ON RAISING THE BAR CAMPAIGN

USW's National Policy Conference in 2019 unanimously passed a resolution calling for action on neglected workplace issues facing women in particular. Raising the Bar on Women's Health and Safety is the result.

Women face different health and safety risks, because of biology and social attitudes. Most workplaces, personal protective equipment and safety programs have been designed to suit male workers, and women have often been left out. Too often, women's questions and concerns are dismissed. The women themselves are ridiculed, put down as "natural complainers" or "not tough enough." Women often stay silent, just to stop the backlash or to protect efforts to gain respect inside our union, including access to committee roles, education and elected office. We need to do better.

There are a myriad of health and safety issues that only women face or more so than their male counterparts, and the list is long, some include: Uniforms and work dress codes; Workplace design and ergonomics; Sexual and other harassment; Domestic violence; Sexual violence; Transitioning gender; Pregnancy (including loss of pregnancy); Breast-feeding and new motherhood; Menopause; Reproductive health (including fertility, fertility treatments and access to free menstrual products); Cancer (breast, ovarian, cervical and uterine); Stress, Mental health and work-life balance.

Remember: An injury to one is an injury to all—regardless of whether that "one" is a man or a woman. Let's do all we can to Raise the Bar!

THE ONGOING ISSUE OF BATHROOM BREAKS IN THE WORKPLACE

Local 1944 has been hearing examples of members being instructed they are no longer allowed to use company time for a Bio Break, while other members report they are not having any "blow back".

"We had for a long time now issues around washroom usage," said Acting President Donna Hokiro. "When I became Acting President, the Local took on the issue in a way we hadn't before. We asked our members in an [online article](#), To Pee or Not to Pee, what their experiences were, because we had heard from members like Sharlaine and others, that they had

been directed to save washroom time for break time. And if they have to use the facilities, outside of break time, discipline was forthcoming. This was of course an issue to us as we had been hearing of all these horror stories. We even heard of how members were directed not to drink water. We received over 100 replies to our survey, we reached out individually to many members, that may have needed an accommodation or help in other ways. It has been an ongoing issue for decades, and continues to be increasingly problematic, for our sisters in particular. We must remain vigilant and steadfast in our resolve to protect and defend women including our health and safety at work."

Learn about the federal and provincial toilets laws and regulations [here](#).



Sister Sharlaine McIntyre, from Unit 53 (then Unit 26), addressed the issue of bathroom breaks in her workplace at the 2019 USW National Policy Conference:

"I was told that if we had to go use the washroom, that it had to be done on our scheduled breaks, or unpaid lunch. But what we're given is a code that we're allowed to go off on our soft phones, where it's an emergency. It's an emergency if you need to use the bathroom while you're on the clock. But we're only allowed below 10 minutes in one week to do that. So most of us have refrained from drinking water during our 8-hour shifts."

During the conference, many sisters seized the opportunity to speak up about the health and safety issues they face on the job. Watch the highlights and listen to Sister McIntyre [here](#).

**Are bathroom breaks an issue in your workplace?
Take 3 minutes to [answer our online survey](#)**

NEWS FROM UNIT 60



PARKING LOT RALLY

On the evening of November 4th, members from Unit 60 Abbotsford gathered for a physically-distanced parking lot rally. They met with their bargaining committee and learned of what exactly is on the table.



The rainy and bitter weather couldn't stop them from expressing how they feel about their employer's insulting package. Their support for their bargaining committee is overwhelming. The solidarity being shown is appreciated and it has truly motivated the committee to go back to the table and let Shaw know that we have no intention of accepting such a disrespectful contract offer.

Check the regular bargaining updates [here](#).

Show your solidarity on social media using the hashtag #NoFear



HOW ARE THINGS GOING IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Because a right denied to one is a right denied to all,
Local 1944 members need to hear from you!

Contact your Local Union Representative
Share your story by email at communications@usw1944.ca



MEMBERS HAVE THE FLOOR

"I retired on November 1st from my job at Mobility in the Loyalty and Retention department, after 31 years serving the customers across Canada in the front lines, and the members of Unit 51 as a Shop Steward and Councillor. What a journey it has been!

I learned so much with my union involvement over the past 17 years, I found my voice and learned I can make a difference while meeting a huge new family. My activism began when I was forced to work Christmas day as a Regular Part Time (RPT). Subsequently I attended my first Union meeting in January of that year, where the late Peter Massy was our Business Agent. As I addressed the issue it sparked a huge debate and an internal vote and, which resulted in a win for RPTs. This was the beginning of my activism.

I served as a Shop Steward and Councillor for many years, Picket Captain and as Unit President for 4 years after our 2005 labour dispute that left us 121 days on a picket line. I had the opportunity to attend conventions in various cities across Canada. I filed many grievances over the years for members, and attended all levels of grievances up to and including three arbitrations.

Those involved in my Union will always have a special place in my heart as we fought the fight together, lifted each other up when times were tough and I know we will continue to stand up for working people and social justice in this workplace and beyond."

— Nancy McCurrach, retired member from Unit 51

"I will sadly remember the customer a couple years ago that called me a "C" four times on a call. A couple months later I went to our annual USW Local 1944 Convention and I spoke on the abuse front line workers sometimes had to endure on the phones. Then others lined up behind me and they shared similar stories of abuse that they had endured on the phones.

After this convention, the United Steelworkers created the [Hang Up on Abuse Campaign](#). I am very proud of my Union for continuing to promote this campaign, and the incredible amount of work that has been done in it so far." — Nancy McCurrach, retired member from Unit 51



Throughout her years of activism, Sister McCurrach attended several conventions across Canada, among which the 2019 USW National Policy Conference where the photo above was taken. From left to right: Luke Russell (Unit 208), Acting President Donna Hokiro, Norm Leffler (Unit 32), Nancy McCurrach, Acting REO QC Robert J. Briza, Alina Gherghinoiu (Unit 51), Trustee Ross Brown

HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS: REFLECTIONS ON A TRAGIC YEAR, AND HOW YOUR RIGHTS MATTER

Members of Local 1944 Civil and Human Rights Committee invite members to reflect on how events in 2020 impacted and violated human rights. Workers face many challenges during COVID, which highlight the right to work in a safe environment. The Committee is currently composed of Candace Knoll (Chair), Jennifer Lyons, Marie Hutchinson, Ashok Tripathi, Keller Reeves, Kerryann Moses, Widmarc Innocent, Brendan Taylor, Cory Anderson, and Chris Endicott.

A YEAR OF VIOLATIONS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

When we take stock of all that has transpired this year, it is safe to say that 2020 will go down as a benchmark year when it comes to the blatant and cruel violations to human rights. Here are just a few of the most notable injustices we saw this year:

- More cases arose where members of Canada's indigenous community were victims of discrimination and racism. On March 10, Chief Allan Adam, an Indigenous Canadian man, was punched and tackled by a RCMP officer, who confronted him and his family members about an expired licence plate tag in Fort McMurray, Alberta. This is an example of one of the many cases of police brutality against Canadian Indigenous people

that are reported. Luckily this incident was caught on video, and yet at first police ruled it was not excessive violence. For every case caught on camera, there are likely many others that were harmed though not filmed and were discriminated against in ways we can only imagine. On September 28, Joyce Echaquan, a 37 year old woman of the Atikamekw nation was insulted and sworn at by hospital staff as she lay dying in her hospital bed. Discrimination against Indigenous people is still prevalent today in Canada's health care system.

- On the evening of March 13, in Louisville, Kentucky, 26 year old Breonna Taylor, a Black woman, EMT and aspiring nurse, was shot multiple times in her bed while asleep by police during a botched police raid.

- On May 25, George Floyd, a 46 year old black man was arrested in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. Officer Derek Chauvin, a white police officer knelt on Floyd's neck for eight minutes 46 seconds while he was face down and handcuffed. Floyd pleaded with the officer telling him he couldn't breathe and begging for his mom. George Floyd died within the hour.

It is clear that the right to be free from discrimination due to race or ethnicity continues to be violated as so heartbreakingly evident in these tragedies. The public took a stand with protests around the world crying out for justice. We must preserve the human rights we are all entitled to.

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Did you know that we are protected by laws that allow us to be who we are? Well, if you don't know, or you want to know a little more, here is a little crash course: In 1948 after World War II, representatives from the 50-member States of the United Nations came together to create a list of the rights that each person in each corner of the world should have. These rights stand to protect global citizens from discrimination.

PROHIBITED GROUNDS OF DISCRIMINATION

As per the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA), the prohibited grounds of discrimination are:

- race
- national or ethnic origin
- colour
- religion
- age
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender identity or expression
- marital status, family status
- genetic characteristics
- disability
- conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

Did you know that these rights apply to you in the workplace? In fact, the workplace is unfortunately where many people face discrimination. It is important that if you are a victim or witness such discrimination that you take action – reach out to a shop steward for guidance.

WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATION

It is also important that members know about another key part of their rights outlined in the CHRA: Workplace Accommodation.

"Sometimes people need to be treated differently in order to be fair to them. As an employer or service provider, you have an obligation to eliminate negative treatment of individuals, based on prohibited grounds of discrimination. This is called your duty to accommodate and it is your obligation to accommodate a person when their needs are based on the grounds in the Canadian Human Rights Act. This may require that alternative arrangements be made to ensure full participation of a person." (Source: Canadian Human Rights Commission Website)



HUMAN RIGHTS

DO THE “RIGHTS” THING

Human Rights are for everyone, everywhere. It is everyone’s job to do the “Rights” thing and take a stand when a system, a policy or an individual puts those rights at risk.

Your USW Local 1944 Civil and Human Rights committee is on a mission to show our members how to do the “Rights” thing. Our goal is to increase awareness, educate and to inspire membership participation. Look out for the exciting initiatives your Human Rights committee has in store for you. In the words of Elie Wiesel, “Action is the only remedy to indifference.”

For more information on your human rights,
please visit: www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca

Find more information on
the USW Local 1944 Civil
and Human Rights Committee
on the [web page](#)

Contact the Committee by email
at rights@usw1944.ca

Chairperson: Candace Knoll

DISCOVER OUR COMMITTEES

Get involved!

Getting involved with your Local will help you to improve your skills, develop your network, and make an impact in your workplace and community.

Join a network of activists and ensure that no member is left behind with the Project for United Membership Action (PUMA).

Lobby for laws that have a positive impact on our workplaces and communities with the Political Action Committee.

Become an advocate for human’s rights in your community and Union with the Civil and Human Rights Committee.

Ensure that our workplaces are healthy and safe with the Worker’s Compensation and Health and Safety Committee.

Seize opportunities for mentoring and leadership development through the Next Generation Committee.

Benefit from training and leadership development through the Women of Steel Committee.

Stay involved when you retire by joining the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees.



More information:
usw1944.ca/committees

ERGONOMICS

THE ISSUE OF ERGONOMICS WHEN WORKING FROM HOME

This year, as many workers have had their world turn upside down due to COVID, it is vital more than ever that we ensure that workplace safety protocols are being followed.

By the third week of March, most call centre employees were deployed to work from home. However, the appropriate ergonomic supports have not been offered.

As part of the AHA (At Home Agent) program, it is mandatory that each agent purchase their own desk and chair that meet ergonomic safety standards.

One member who works for Telus (not in the AHA program) said she is not aware of any ergonomic standards or supports available to her. She was also told she would have to purchase her own chair/desk if she wanted it to be ergonomic suitable, despite the fact that she is not allowed to work in the office.

All of our members are entitled to a safe workplace, and that includes proper ergonomics. Having the appropriate office equipment makes this possible.

Without proper ergonomics, you are at risk for developing a wide array of repetitive strain injuries (RSI) such as carpal tunnel, tendonitis and bursitis – just to name a few.

Despite proper ergonomics, nearly two million Canadians in the workforce suffer from RSI’s and the numbers are rising. If you are suffering from any of these issues or any kind of disability or barrier that prevents you from performing the necessary tasks of your job, it is important that you reach out to your manager and the union to request accommodation. It is important to note accommodations are not always related to a disability.

REMEMBER – when filling out an accommodation form always check the box that includes the Union in the process.

– Submitted by the Civil and Human Rights Committee members



USW CONFERENCES

USW 2020 VIRTUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

On November 17–18, 2020, the United Steelworkers held our first-ever virtual conference to help close the gap created by the pandemic. It was structured around 10 themes such as Health and Safety, Collective Bargaining or Civil and Human Rights, and consisted of nearly 100 different training sessions. 24 members from Local 1944 attended the conference and were able to take back practical knowledge to their workplaces.

"I had the opportunity to attend the 2020 Virtual Education Conference. The courses were well put together and the facilitators were very knowledgeable on the subjects offered. Our Union has so many different industries under its umbrella, it was interesting to hear the different viewpoints of the membership. I chose to focus on courses of communication and representing the members as a Shop Steward. The information and the class involvement showed me different ideas and different approaches the Stewards use to represent the members. I really enjoyed the training." — *Norman Leffler, Unit 32*

"It was good to see and hear many of the Sisters and Brothers from the Union in regards to issues and strategies of the day. Hopefully, we will build on many of the discussions and ideas heard to use in the upcoming year of bargaining. Solidarity is alive and well." — *Czar Loquia, Unit 10 Secretary and Counsellor*

"It was wonderful. I learned a lot and it was a great experience for me. I look forward to being more involved and hopefully attending more seminars in the future. Koodos to everybody and the hard work was greatly appreciated." — *Brody Mott, Unit 8*

"I very much enjoyed attending the 'Smarter is Stronger' Conference in November 2020. It was a change moving over to using Zoom to host everyone from all over North America, but the USW made it work well and it ran very smoothly. I enjoyed getting to learn more about bargaining, promoting solidarity and improving communication through the Unit and Local level from members all over the continent with perspectives from many different locals. I hope to use this education to help our Local going into a bargaining year next year!" — *Matt Rizzo, Unit 7*

"This was my first time participating in the Union training. I must say it was a great experience and I have learned a lot about the history, process and how the Union works. I gained more confidence after seeing how big our Union family is." — *Mueiz Elkhatim, Unit 5*

USW DISTRICT 5: 56th ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUEBEC

ASSEMBLÉE ANNUELLE 2020

On November 18–19, 2020, the United Steelworkers held the 56th Annual conference virtually, attended by Local 1944 members. Delegates from Locals across Quebec discussed tax fairness, health and safety, and the advancement of women.

A panel discussed certain aspects experienced in our workplaces on how the current health measures are disrupting occupational health and safety. You can watch the video [here](#).

Another notable event was a panel discussing the status of women titled "So that women do not have to pay the price of the pandemic". The video is available [here](#).



"For the first time ever, the USW District 5 Annual Conference was held virtually. A tribute was paid to Jean Gérin-Lajoie, who was one of the great figures of the industrial labour movement in Quebec. He was actively involved in the FTQ and was the very first Quebec Steelworkers Director elected by universal suffrage of the members. He died earlier this year.

Despite the distance between them, delegates had the opportunity to speak out on several issues in Quebec such as the reform of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the presumption in the event of psychological occupational injury, and harassment prevention in the workplace. However, attendees are looking forward to being able to hold an in-person meeting again, hopefully next year!" — *Acting Vice President Pierre-Luc Dick*

"The USW District 5 56th Annual Conference was held under the theme Ensemble ('Together'). We heard that differences of opinion can divide, polarize and radicalize, as often seen on social media. Differences of opinion are at the very foundation of unions nonetheless. It is thanks to differences of opinion that the labour movement makes progress and moves forward.

In the words of USW District 5 Director Dominic Lemieux, 'These differences shouldn't cause divide, nor become a reason to hurt each other or destroy the solidarity between us; they shouldn't make us lose sight of our primary mission: Solidarity'. This was an important reminder for me. Indeed, the cause we support is greater than ourselves. We cannot succeed in building solidarity if we adopt radical positions, however we can do so by interchanging our ideas, with respect." — *Danis Bouffard, Unit 602 Chair*

Click [here](#) to watch or rewatch the Director's report and tribute to Jean Gérin-Lajoie

USW LOCAL 1944 WOMEN OF STEEL COMMITTEE

reveal your inner

WOMAN OF STEEL

Clothing & accessories <https://shopusw1944.ca>

