

June 2026

## **Regional Office Report to the Regional Council 2026**

This report will encompass key areas to give you an overall sense of the work of the Regional Office.

### ***Regional Staffing Update***

Over the course of the 2025/26 fiscal year, we have enjoyed stability in the staff complement. We've had a few changes but continue to manage workloads well. Kevin Jacobs, a previous member, has now joined the team as an Employment Relations Officer (ERO). He was a very experienced and dedicated steward and while most of our staff come from lengthy labour advocacy backgrounds, Kevin earned his way to an ERO role by consistent dedication and support for members. Kevin has brought a wealth of knowledge concerning the internal experience of working in the federal realm. You may also know him from past work on the elected side, including Branch, Regional and National initiatives. Kevin's new role is a flexible position that allows me to assign him work from both western regions. While he is currently assigned predominantly BC/Yukon work, he has taken on several Prairie/NWT files and will continue to do so going forward.

Tesh Aytenfisu is currently on a leave of absence and we are staffing for an ERO term shortly. In the meantime, one of the most seasoned PIPSC EROs has come back from retirement to assist with coverage. Harinder Mahil will be with us until the end of July 2026. Harinder Mahil is an Order of BC recipient and a nationally and internationally recognized labour advocate.

Meira Gisser has returned from a parental leave and assumed full carriage of a portfolio. We are grateful in this region to have several very experienced representatives who are sought out by colleagues across the country for their expertise.

Sean Kemball, John Hanrahan, Barry Reid, Natasha Chartier, David Sauer, Prashila Chand and Leslie Fiorino continue to provide support for our members in this region as well. I believe that our representational support levels are appropriate and while Workforce Adjustment and the new Return to Office mandate inquiries continue to drive volume, I feel we are able to manage the workflow at this time.

### ***Representation***

As of the date of this report creation (May 20), we have 388 active cases in the Prairie/NWT Region. This is an increase from last year. Over the past year, we have created an average of 50 new cases per month in this region, a decrease in volume from the previous fiscal year. Of note, John Hanrahan is one of two representatives who remain assigned to a project with respect to historical vaccine related grievances. He has secured a high volume of resolutions for impacted members and while these resolutions are under non-disclosure agreements, they represent significant financial outcomes for members.

As for case types, we continue to note an array of grievances and complaints, and Human Rights based issues remain the highest contributor. This is the same trend as the previous fiscal year.

We continue to have numerous wins in the region and I would estimate a total settlement value of shy of one million dollars from Prairie/NWT representational staff. As before, while we would love to share the cases, we must be mindful of confidentiality. In general terms, we have settled grievances, protected human rights in numerous instances and held employers to respect member rights in a variety of different mechanisms. You may have heard me say in the past, this is only a fraction of the work that the representational staff do. Most cases remain confidential and you never hear of the significant successes.

We continue to see adjudication bookings in the region as well; however, most have been resolved ahead of the hearing. This is generally best for the impacted member as the settlement remains confidential. We have five cases slated for adjudication during the remainder of 2026; however, I anticipate only two or three will go forward.

When an adjudication hearing happens, EROs are diverted away from every day representational tasks in order to dedicate their time to advocacy before the federal and provincial labour boards. The resulting impact is a delay in service to members who require support. This domino effect demonstrates the importance of stewards, so that we can focus the attention of EROs on complex legal arguments and the inherently adversarial process of adjudication. The staff wish to thank our dedicated stewards. You make a substantial difference and we are grateful for our partnership.

### ***Stewards and Training***

With respect to stewards, we currently have 279 in our region, an increase of 31 over the last fiscal year. This means that 16% of PIPSC stewards are within the Prairie/NWT umbrella; however, we have 10% of the members across the nation. This year has been one of growth in this area.

We have hosted two Basic Steward Trainings (BSTs) since we last met. Our Winnipeg session occurred in the fall and our Edmonton session was in the spring. We trained 39 new stewards. We also facilitated Advanced Labour School most recently in Winnipeg and trained 45 stewards. The school included content on the Duty to Accommodate, Advanced Grievance Handling, Investigative Techniques and Workforce Adjustment.

Our wait list for future BST training sits at 28 at this time. All waitlisted prospective stewards are invited to each BST, which can facilitate 20 stewards at a time; however, we do make some exceptions when there are a handful of additional applicants.

As shared each year, our stewards are the lifeblood of the union, resolving issues at the onset, negotiating better outcomes for members' individual matters and helping to maintain relationships amongst members and management. The relationship between EROs and stewards is symbiotic, we rely on one another.

### ***Conclusion***

Finally, we hope that, if not already a steward, you will join us in holding the employers accountable for you and your colleagues labour rights, particularly in a time of WFA and another RTO mandate, and sign up online to become a PIPSC steward.