

# CUPE Local 500

## Living Wage Campaign

### Municipal Election 2018



The people  
who serve our city  
**deserve our  
support**

The city's 311 customer service representatives spend everyday talking to Winnipeggers about their concerns. It's a tough and stressful job – they are expected to know just about everything about city operations. But as critical and stressful as these jobs are, the starting wage for a 311 customer service representative at the City of Winnipeg is only \$13.70/hour.

#### Why is CUPE campaigning for a living wage?

Many of the people who deliver city services don't make a living wage. We believe that these workers, whether they are city employees or contractors, deserve to be able to pay their bills and feed their families, just like everyone else.

CUPE and the labour movement have long advocated for fair and living wages across the country in both the public and private sector. Since we are in a municipal election, we felt that now is the right time to put this issue front and centre.

As part of our campaign, we're calling on all city council and mayoral candidates to commit to making Winnipeg a Living Wage Employer and adopt a living wage policy. We want as many council candidates as possible to support a living wage so that we can hold them accountable after the election.

#### What is a Living Wage?

A living wage is the hourly wage needed to provide the income necessary to pay for basic needs such as rent, food, transportation and childcare. A living wage is a bare-bones calculation and does not cover many expenses like debt payments or savings for emergencies or retirement.

A living wage is not the same as minimum wage or necessarily a fair wage. The minimum wage is the lowest wage employers can legally pay workers according to legislation or contract. The living wage sets a higher standard – it reflects what earners in a family need to bring home to support their families, based on the actual cost of living in a specific community.

Using data from 2016, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Manitoba Office, calculated the Winnipeg living wage as \$14.54/hour. Because of increasing cost of living since then, we are calling for a \$15 hourly wage from the new city council.



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Some city services like garbage and recycling collection, and snow removal, are privatized. Private companies are not required to pay living wages as part of their contracts with the city, and many of their employees barely make more than minimum wage.



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**THIS ELECTION, VOTE  
FOR LIVING WAGES**

**CUPE500**  
Canadian Union of Public Employees

## Why is it important for the City of Winnipeg to become a living wage employer?

The City is a major employer that provides vital services in our community that we all depend on every day. Sadly, some of those people providing those services earn very modest wages – less than the basic costs of living in our community.

For the City of Winnipeg to become a Living Wage Employer, it would first mean making sure all city of Winnipeg employees earned a living wage. Second, it would mean requiring a living wage standard to be included in all RFPs for contracted services.

## Why are you targeting municipal council and mayoral candidates?

Elections are the perfect time to speak up for working families and advocate for a living wage. During the election campaign, mayoral and council candidates will be knocking on doors, talking with Winnipeggers about their priorities for our city.

We know from talking with our friends, families and neighbours, people believe it's important that the workers who serve our communities earn enough to be able to afford to live in them.

## When will the campaign be launched?

The official launch date for the campaign is September 24. Our goal is to bring our message to voters and candidates in as many ways as possible through a multimedia ad campaign. This includes social media ads, billboards, garbage bin and bus bench advertising, direct mailing, and radio ads.

## How can I support CUPE's Living Wage Campaign?

- Tell the candidates seeking your vote that you want them to support a living wage. Use the information in this document for speaking points;
- Discuss the issue with friends, neighbours and family;
- Spread the word via social media and email;
- **YOU CAN VOTE!** This election, vote for living wages!

For more information, visit:  
[cupe500.mb.ca/campaigns/livingwage/](http://cupe500.mb.ca/campaigns/livingwage/)