

TO: All MUNFA members
FROM: MUNFA Executive
DATE: May 22, 2026
SUBJECT: Notice to Bargain and Memorial's 2026-27 Operating Budget

On May 20, 2026, Memorial University served MUNFA with formal notice of its desire to commence collective bargaining for the renewal of our collective agreement, which expires on August 31, 2026. The University has proposed June 17, 2026 as the date for the exchange of opening proposals.

As shared previously, MUNFA's proposals committee began development of our negotiating proposals last spring, completing an extensive phased consultation process with members across our campuses to ensure robust member input. The proposals package will be finalized by the MUNFA executive in the coming days. MUNFA has been preparing for these negotiations for over a year, and we enter bargaining well-prepared and united.

The timing of this notice is significant. On the same day, the Board of Regents approved [Memorial's 2026-27 operating budget](#). The university has described it as a stabilizing budget, made possible by the provincial operating grant. However, what it delivers is an across-the-board 4% cuts to all academic units and an unplanned Voluntary Retirement Program that may leave units short-staffed in September. These outcomes suggest that more program cuts and job losses are coming.

During budget estimates debates in the [House of Assembly on May 21, 2026](#), the Minister of Education confirmed that Memorial University received what it asked for in terms of provincial funding. Why would University leadership ask for a budget that results in yet another round of deep cuts? Members deserve a clear answer to that question, and MUNFA will continue pressing for one.

This concerning news coupled with Memorial's own recently released [Employee Engagement Survey](#), conducted by TalentMap, tells a striking story. Across the university, trust in senior leadership is low, with only 31% of respondents rating it favourably, placing Memorial 23 points below the benchmark. Confidence in how change is being managed is lower, with just 22% of respondents viewing it favourably. A majority of respondents do not believe Memorial plans for challenges before they become crises. Perhaps most telling: fewer than one in four employees believe senior leadership will actually act on what this survey found. These are not MUNFA's characterizations. They are Memorial's own data, from its own workforce.

As we head into bargaining, members should ask themselves what kind of university we are fighting for. The answer, for MUNFA, is one where transparency is not an afterthought and where the people who make this university work have a genuine role in the decisions that

shape their working lives, not informed after the fact. That is the standard we will be holding the administration to, at the bargaining table and beyond. Members with questions or feedback are encouraged to reach out to the MUNFA office at munfa@mun.ca.