

Agreement between CAS and CUPE could not be reached

Peel Children's Aid Society and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 4914 met with provincially appointed mediators last week, but after 10 hours of negotiations an agreement could not be reached.

"We are disappointed that we were not able to reach an agreement with CUPE Local 4914 bargaining committee," commented CEO Rav Bains of Peel Children's Aid. "We were open to exploring alternative approaches to dealing with the remaining outstanding issues if we could do so without impeding our ability to provide child protection services within our financial constraints."

CUPE Local 4914, which represents the front line, administrative and support staff at CAS, has been on strike since Sept. 19. Representatives of the Local were at Town Hall in Caledon East last Tuesday, distributing material to people attending the evening's council meeting.

According to the material, they are on strike to "make our workplace safer, healthier and more dignified."

"We want to return to work, but Peel CAS refuses to address the issues that matter - a working environment that is respectful, where members feel safe and where quality services are delivered to those who depend on us - children and their families," it added.

CAS reported it has implemented its contingency plan during the strike and will continue to provide essential child protection services to the community.

"The care and safety of children and families we work with continues to be our priority," Bains said. "We encourage our community to continue to call with child protection concerns. We will be prioritizing and responding to the most urgent situations to ensure the safety of children in Peel Region."

"We ask the public for their patience and understanding during the continuing labour disruption," Bains added.

At this time, no further talks have not been scheduled between the union and the agency.