

Negotiations 2020

**We're done
working ourselves
sick!**



fiq

APTS

**131,000 REASONS
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**Consultation booklet on the
APTS-FIQ intersectoral matters**

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For the FIQ and FIQP members



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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
SALARIES	5
Purchasing power and enrichment	5
Catch-up salary increase	6
RETIREMENT	7
Actuarial reduction for early retirement	7
Gradual retirement program	7
Pensionable earnings for RREGOP	8
Retention measures for those eligible for retirement	9
Governance of the RREGOP pension plan	9
PARENTAL RIGHTS	10
Supporting young children and families with specific needs	10
Harmonizing and improving parental rights to eliminate any discrimination related to job status, family situation, gender, sexual orientation and pregnancy	11
Modernizing and enhancing parental leaves	12
REGIONAL DISPARITIES	13
Revising the sectors, localities and institutions subject to various premiums	13
Improving benefits, allowances and working conditions	13
Leaves to work in a northern institution	14
Trips out for a death	14

Introduction

The next provincial negotiations will take place in a context where the economy and Québec's public finances are doing well. The public purse is well stocked and the government can't claim a lack of money to reject our demands.

Faced with difficult and not very attractive working conditions as well as staff shortages, the *Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS)* and the *Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec-FIQ* and FIQ | Secteur privé joined forces demanding that the government provide proper recognition of the value of the professionals and technicians in the network. They will jointly present your demands on intersectoral matters: salaries, retirement, parental rights and regional disparities.

There are 23 proposals in this document for discussion and adoption by your local general assemblies. These proposals are based on the preliminary consultations that the two organizations held, and their joint work.

The results of this consultation will be revealed in October at the APTS General Council and the FIQ (FIQP) Provincial Council - Negotiations to determine the proposals that will be tabled with the employer party for these provincial negotiations on intersectoral matters.

The floor is now yours.

Salaries

Collective agreements negotiated in an austerity context and a penalizing dynamic based on gender-based occupational discrimination in public services – with 72% women, remember – have shaped the current working conditions. For these reasons, salary progression has often fallen short of expectations and is far from due recognition of the network’s professionals and technicians’ work.

More than a simple issue of arithmetic, the current situation has to be corrected. To achieve this, there are two parts to the salary demands: a 3.2% increase a year to bolster your purchasing power. And a 4% a year salary catch-up to correct the systemic compensation gap. This is based on a 3-year collective agreement.

These are not percentages chosen randomly: they come out of extensive studies aimed at having the value of the network’s professionals and technicians’ work properly recognized.

Purchasing power and enrichment

To protect our purchasing power, fully participate in the collective enrichment and catch up on the growing lag between you and other employees in Québec, we are proposing a salary demand increase of 3.2% a year to cover inflation (2%) and participation in Québec’s collective enrichment (1.2%).

Proposal 1

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	TOTAL
Economic parameters	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	9.6%

That the salary demand comprise a parameter tied to the economy, involving a 3.2% annual increase.

Catch-up salary increase

To the salary demands related to the economic parameters, we are adding a demand for a catch-up salary increase. There is a significant salary lag in the healthcare system that has built up over the last few years. Whether compared with other public corporations (Hydro-Québec, SAQ, Loto-Québec, etc.), all the other activity sectors in Québec (private sector, municipal administration, public corporations, universities and federal administration) or even the other Canadian provinces. This is why we are proposing to add a salary catch-up target of 4% a year.

Proposal 2

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	TOTAL
Catch-up salary increase	4%	4%	4%	12%

That the salary demand include a parameter linked to a 4% catch-up per year.

Retirement

The Government and Public Employees Retirement Plan (RREGOP) is in good financial health. This makes it possible to make certain modifications to improve working conditions and retain active members in the workforce. There are several proposals in this respect.

Actuarial reduction for early retirement

As of July 1, 2020, the actuarial reduction for early retirement goes from 4% to 6% per year of early retirement. This change arising from the last round of negotiations in 2015 makes it possible to set an actuarial reduction that more closely reflects the real cost of early retirement for the plan. An analysis by the APTS-FIQ actuaries reveals that a 5% reduction per year of early retirement would be more representative of the real cost for the plan.

Proposal 3

That when early retirement is taken, the actuarial reduction be 5% per year of early retirement.

Gradual retirement program

The current conditions of the gradual retirement program stipulate a maximum of 5 years, at the end of which an employee must retire, unless there is an agreement with the employer to continue with the conditions prior to the agreement. We are proposing to increase the length of 5 years (60 months) to 7 years (84 months).

Proposal 4

That the gradual retirement program may extend over a maximum of 7 years.

Furthermore, we are proposing to allow the gradual retirement program to be continued beyond the initially agreed upon duration when that duration is less than the maximum, in addition to allowing employees to return to their prior working conditions when the agreement ends, without having to retire.

Proposal 5

To allow an employee on a gradual retirement program to continue the program agreed upon with the employer beyond the initial duration, for a period determined by the employee that cannot exceed the 7-year maximum set out in the gradual retirement program.

Proposal 6

That employees covered by the gradual retirement program no longer be obliged to retire at the end of the agreement; that they may maintain their work hours as they were before the start of their gradual retirement program.

Pensionable earnings for RREGOP

Over successive rounds of negotiations, a number of premiums have been enhanced or added. The share of earnings that these premiums represent in relation to total salary has increased over time for a number of employees. This addition of premiums results in a higher standard of living, which at retirement declines significantly, given that RREGOP does not consider these premiums. As a result, these members may be much poorer off when they retire.

Further APTS-FIQ work must be done to determine which premiums could be added to pensionable earnings for RREGOP, to better reflect the income level prior to retirement when an employee retires.

The salary supplements are also a concern because most of them have been integrated into the salary scales, therefore becoming eligible for RREGOP. However, a few exceptions persist in the collective agreement, and we think it is appropriate to continue the work in this direction.

Proposal 7

That the APTS-FIQ alliance study and propose, if applicable, a broader concept of pensionable income for RREGOP, to include certain premiums and salary supplements.

Retention measures for those eligible for retirement

Retaining personnel eligible for retirement facilitates the transfer of knowledge and expertise to those who are taking over. It can also help to reduce the collateral effects of labour shortages. We believe that further incentive measures must be added, including an enhancement of the pension for those who work past when they become eligible for pension benefits without actuarial reduction.

Proposal 8

That the APTS-FIQ alliance study and propose, if applicable, the introduction of a pension enhancement measure for those who continue to work after meeting one of the criteria for a pension without actuarial reduction.

The Québec Pension Plan allows the employee to receive a pension while still working and even enhance the pension while continuing to receive benefits. We think it would be appropriate to modernize RREGOP in the same way, under certain conditions. Employees would benefit from such a modification and it would help to retain the workforce.

Proposal 9

That the APTS-FIQ alliance assess and propose, if applicable, the possibility of employees receiving RREGOP pension benefits without severing their employment relationship, thereby keeping their job and, if they wish, their participation in the plan, providing them with an enhanced pension.

Governance of the RREGOP pension plan

Currently, the contributions paid to the plan may increase or decrease based on its financial situation. These variations greatly limit the possibilities of improving the indexation of pension benefits for retirees. Stabilizing the contributions would reduce the scope of their variations when there is a deficit and increase the chances of generating surpluses to index retirees' pensions.

Proposal 10

That the APTS-FIQ alliance study and propose, if applicable, a review of the RREGOP rules of governance in the aim of stabilizing contributions and improving the pension indexation.

Parental rights

Parental rights are very important for our members. It is therefore appropriate to make improvements in this plan to make it even more equitable and in tune with actual needs in several respects.

Supporting young children and families with specific needs

The balance sought between personal life and work life necessarily involves a better balance between family and work. We believe that an improved part-time leave without pay, offering the possibility of a lighter schedule during a child's first years, will meet this need.

Proposal 11

To allow any parents or legal guardians of a child under 9 years of age to reduce their work time to up to 40% of full-time, with the possibility of maintaining their full participation in RREGOP.

In cases where a child's condition requires the presence of one of her or his parents or legal guardians, we believe that the terms and conditions and length of the leave without pay or part-time leave without pay should be improved. The aim of the next two proposals is to improve these leaves.

Proposal 12

To allow any parent or legal guardian of a child aged 9 or over who has social and emotional problems, a disability or a prolonged illness and whose condition requires the presence of the employee concerned, to reduce their working time to up to 40% of full-time and maintain their full participation in RREGOP.

Proposal 13

To allow any parent or legal guardian of a child with social and emotional problems, a disability or a prolonged illness who requires the presence of the employee concerned, to have leave without pay or part-time leave without pay, with no limits placed on its duration, and regardless of the child's age.

Harmonizing and improving parental rights to eliminate any discrimination related to job status, family situation, gender, sexual orientation and pregnancy

In order to ensure that no rights or benefits are lost while on maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, any assignments should be offered during these periods of leave under the provincial provisions of the collective agreement.

Proposal 14

To extend the right to obtain an assignment (replacement) during parental leave and clearly stipulate the right to such an assignment during the maternity/paternity portion.

According to the current provisions, only employees who have a position are entitled to a part-time leave without pay. This may result in inequitable working conditions among parents, based on whether or not they have a position.

Proposal 15

To make part-time parental leave without pay accessible to employees without positions, under the same conditions as those for other employees.

The collective agreement stipulates that experience is accumulated during a parental leave for the purposes of determining salary, but not for obtaining a position. Since women are the ones who generally take parental leave, greater numbers of them suffer the disadvantage of not accumulating experience for the purposes of obtaining a position.

Proposal 16

That the accumulation of experience during parental leave be recognized for the purposes not only of determining salary, but also of obtaining a position.

Modernizing and enhancing parental leaves

Many couples have to turn to assisted reproduction, and that requires a number of medical appointments which are not all covered by the present bank of 4 days of special leaves set out in the collective agreement. The situation is the same for a mother whose pregnancy requires more visits to health professionals than usual.

Proposal 17

That the reasons for absence allowed under the 4-day bank of leave for pregnancy-related visits be expanded and the number of days of leave be increased to 8 days.

The father's or adoptive parents' presence and involvement with the child are important and help all family members adapt better after a birth or adoption in the family. The current conditions, which stipulate five weeks of paternity leave or adoption leave, could be improved to reflect how society has evolved in terms of parental roles.

Proposal 18

To increase the number of weeks of paternity and adoption leave to 10 weeks.

Regional disparities

Regions that are far from major urban centres encounter a variety of specific issues related to the cost of living and attracting and retaining a workforce, particularly in the specialized jobs held by APTS and FIQ (FIQP) members. This situation is aggravated by the current labour shortages.

Revising the sectors, localities and institutions subject to various premiums

Certain localities or regions are grappling with a rarity or even an acute labour shortage. To help attract and retain personnel in more regions and localities and keep staff from leaving for other localities or facilities, particularly those where the 8% premium is paid, we think that the scope of application of the retention premium applicable to certain localities needs to be expanded.

Proposal 19

That the APTS-FIQ alliance study and propose, if applicable, expanding the scope of Section X, Retention Premium, to include certain regions or new localities affected by labour issues.

Periodically, it is necessary to add localities, regions or territories covered by the isolation and remote premium.

Proposal 20

That the APTS-FIQ alliance study and propose, if applicable, adding localities in certain sectors requiring the isolation and remote premium.

Improving benefits, allowances and working conditions

The rule on regional disparities stipulates the granting of benefits linked to trips out¹ for employees recruited from more than 50 kilometres away from the locality where

1. *Trips out* is the term used in the collective agreement that refers to the employer reimbursing the employee's or her dependents' expenses to travel to the locality of her hiring. For example, the reimbursement of an airplane ticket to return to Montréal.

they work. This rule is not conducive to recruiting employees who already live in the locality, and thus results in disparities based on employees' locality of origin.

Proposal 21

To extend access to trips out to all employees in the locality concerned, regardless of where they were recruited.

Leaves to work in a northern institution

The main recruitment pool for northern institutions is in the southern part of Québec. Some employers in the health and social services system are nonetheless reluctant to authorize leaves without pay for their employees to work in a northern institution. This adds to the difficulty in recruiting personnel for a growing number of northern institutions.

The new organizational reality of the institutions (particularly those covered by the reform of the OPTILAB laboratories), may result in a given employer covering the southern and northern parts of Québec, making it impossible to apply the leave without pay to work in a northern institution for employees who work in those institutions.

Proposal 22

To review the leave without pay to work in a northern institution to make it more accessible, extend its duration and revise its terms and conditions, so that it covers more institutions and takes into account the institutions' organizational changes.

Trips out for a death

The death of a loved one is an ordeal that has even greater consequences for employees in remote regions who sometimes have no or limited access to roads to get to the funeral. There is no trip out stipulated in the current collective agreement for this.

Proposal 23

To add additional trips out for employees in the event of a death stipulated in the provincial provisions of the collective agreement.



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