Collective Bargaining

A strategically negotiated, and properly drafted, collective agreement both establishes the foundation for the relationship between an employer and its trade unions and protects the employer against expensive mistakes.

We have extensive experience in representing employers of all sizes, in both private and public sectors, in connection with first and renewal collective agreements. The demands of a first collective agreement are often very different and more complex. We have the necessary skills to not only negotiate a first agreement, but to present arguments before labour boards who may have the power to impose a first collective agreement.

We understand our clients needs and goals in collective bargaining, and have deep-rooted knowledge of the industries within which they operate. While we strive to avoid work disruptions, we are regularly called upon to develop contingency plans in the event of a strike or lockout, so as to limit operational disruptions. We represent employers before labour boards and courts in order to limit unlawful activity related to work stoppages.

We have developed strong relationships with unions, their executives and their counsel. Our team members act with the highest level of integrity, and are considered in the labour relations community as being firm but fair. We appreciate that our clients' relationships with their trade unions are ongoing, which from time to time requires compromises, but without impacting their rights to operate efficiently.

We represent employers of all sizes and levels of sophistication in a multitude of industries. We have deep-rooted knowledge in the manufacturing, transportation, retail, telecommunications, infrastructure, construction, longshoring, mining, airline and sports industries, among many others. Within the public sector, we are often called upon to represent and negotiate on behalf of school boards, hospitals and other health-care institutions, municipalities and libraries.

Experience

- Canada's largest shipbuilder in a highly mediatised collective bargaining agreement settlement. Our client and its union reached an agreement, which not only provides a solution to the immediate needs of the company, but also ensured that they could continue to bid on continuing projects.
- A global furniture and houseware company in a significant collective bargaining agreement in Montréal, which made substantial changes to their methods of operation.
- A digital media and marketing solutions company in a new and revamped collective bargaining agreement (CBA) covering the sales groups in Québec, reached after difficult negotiations and a lockout. The CBA reached in Montréal became the basis of the CBA in all other cities where the client operates with sales employees.

- Various clients with the drafting and negotiation of collective agreements in the warehousing, manufacturing and general maintenance sectors. We provide ongoing assistance with the interpretation and application of collective agreement provisions to workplace dispute resolution and arbitration.
- A leader in the meat processing industry in negotiating a consecutive seven-year collective bargaining agreement that changed the rules regarding operations and cost. Many of the monetary provisions were changed to bring cost efficiencies and savings to the employer.

BLG | Canada's Law Firm

As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 800 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

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