

Questions & Answers

GNWT Position on Pay Increases

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to reaching a collective agreement that meets the common objectives of recognizing our valued public servants and the fiscal sustainability of the GNWT.

The GNWT and the UNW met with mediator, Vince Ready, on October 25-26. At that meeting the GNWT provided a framework in an effort to advance to a final agreement. This document provides employees details on the GNWT position on pay increases.

Q As a unionized GNWT employee, what type of annual pay increases do I receive?

Pay increases in the collective agreement involves two components.

- First, as described in Article 24.09 of the Collective Agreement, each employee not at the maximum salary for their position typically receives a step increase which increases their pay by 2.6% annually.
- The second component, often referred to as the economic increase, is changes in the collective agreement that provide overall increases in the pay grids.

$$\text{Total Pay Increase} = \text{Step Increase} + \text{Economic Increase}$$

Considerable attention is paid to economic increases during collective bargaining, but it is misleading to suggest that the economic increases reflect total pay increases for GNWT employees.

Q What is the current GNWT offer on pay increases?

At mediation the GNWT offered, as part of a five year Collective Agreement, that in addition to the 2.6% annual step increases that there would be economic increases of:

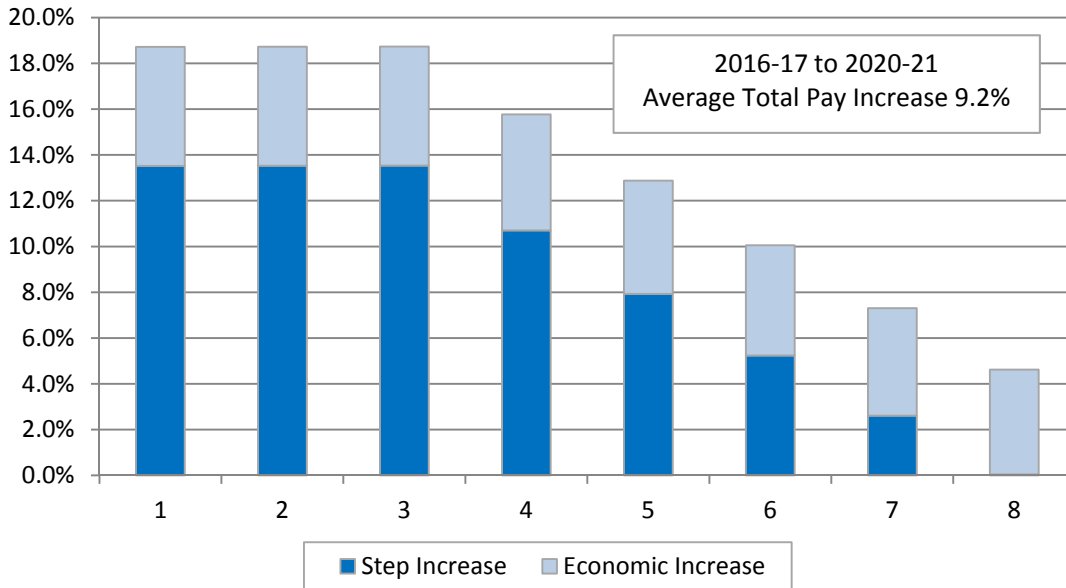
April 1, 2016	0.0%
April 1, 2017	0.0%
April 1, 2018	1.4%
April 1, 2019	1.4%
April 1, 2020	1.7%

Because some employees are already at their maximum pay rate while others have continued to receive 2.6% increases each year, the increased amount paid to individual employees will vary. The average total pay increase for bargaining unit employees would be 9.2% over five years.

Please see Attachment 1 for examples of how employees' pay would increase between from 2016-17 and 2020-21 depending on their step on the pay grid. The graphic below shows the overall average pay increases by employee step on April 1, 2016.

These figures assume that employees stay in the same position over the five years of the collective agreement. It is noteworthy that 19% of bargaining unit employees have obtained promotions to higher paying positions since the current collective agreement expired on March 31, 2016.

Total Pay Increases in GNWT Offer, by Step on April 1, 2016



Q How do the economic increases offered by the GNWT to the UNW compare with other employee groups?

Year	NWT Teachers' Association	NWT Medical Association	Non-Unionized GNWT Employees	Current GNWT Offer
2016-17	0%	0%	0%	0%
2017-18	0%	0%	0%	0%
2018-19	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%
2019-20	1.0%	1.0%	..	1.4%
2020-21	..	1.5%	..	1.7%

In 2018 there have been 44 major public sector collective agreements negotiated across Canada. The average length of duration has been 42.6 months and the average economic increases have been 0.9% annually.

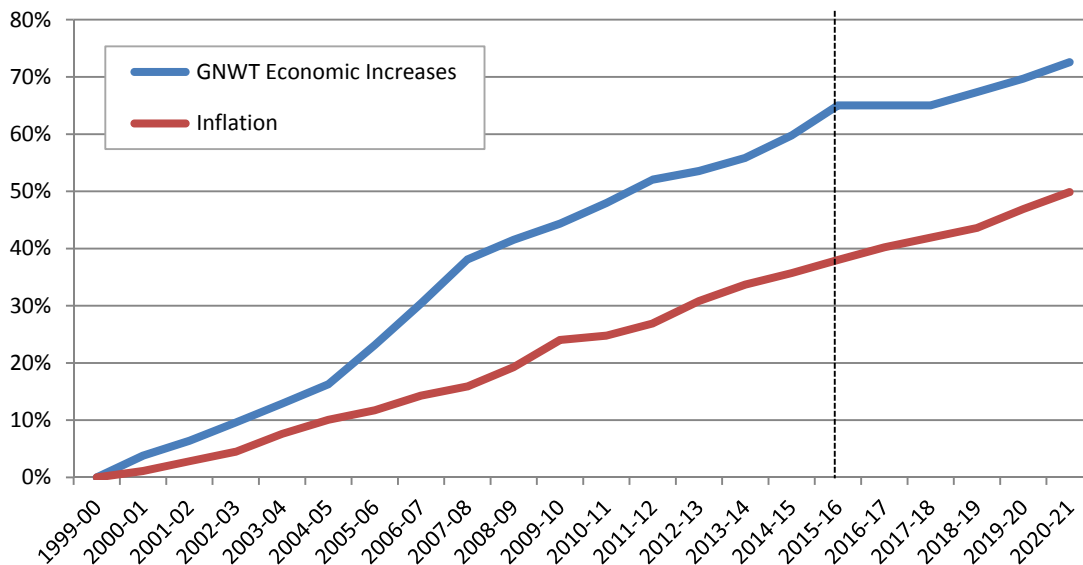
Q There have been considerable communications that the pay increases being offered by the GNWT aren't keeping up with inflation. Is that accurate?

No, this is not accurate.

As noted above, the GNWT offer results in a 9.2% average total pay increase for bargaining unit employees. Inflation is forecasted to be 8.6% for the period covered by the proposed collective agreement.

Over the past 15 years, economic increases for UNW employees have exceeded the inflation rate. The chart below does not include the 2.6% annual step increases paid to employees.

**Comparison of GNWT Economic Increases with Inflation
1999-00 to 2020-21**



Q MLAs received a 1.6% pay increase on April 1, 2018. Why don't employees get the same increase?

MLA pay increases are set by legislation. They do not receive step increases, only the annual increase set out in legislation. MLAs in the 18th Assembly voted to take 0% for 2016-17 and 2017-18.

	UNW Economic Increases	MLA Pay Increase
2008-09	2.5%	2.1%
2009-10	2.0%	2.4%
2010-11	2.5%	0.6%
2011-12	2.8%	1.8%
2012-13	1.0%	2.9%
2013-14	1.5%	1.5%
2014-15	2.5%	0.9%
2015-16	3.3%	2.0%

Following the two years of no increases, MLAs received a 1.6% increase for 2017-18 as described in the legislation. During this period, bargaining unit employees continued to receive the 2.6% annual step increases unless they were already receiving the maximum pay for their position.

However, even just based on economic increases bargaining unit employee pay raises have exceeded the increases for MLAs.

Q Given the potential impacts of a strike, why doesn't the GNWT not just agree to UNW demands?

The GNWT does not want to see a strike. It will hurt residents, businesses and communities. While the GNWT will take steps to mitigate the impact of job action, there is no question that job action will impact service delivery.

Our employees will lose, on average, more than \$7,000 in pay for each month of a strike.

Our employees are extremely dedicated to the work they do to deliver critical programs and services on behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories. The government does not want to see these kinds of impacts on our employees or our residents, businesses and communities. However the GNWT must act in the best interest of all residents of the NWT.

The GNWT believes the offer proposed at mediation is fair given our financial context. It builds on our overall compensation and benefits package provided to UNW members which includes:

- average annual salary and Northern Allowance of more than \$96,000 annually;
- average of 42 days of paid leave annually;
- extensive provisions for special leave and sick leave; and
- a Defined Benefit pension plan generally viewed as one of the best in the country.

In addition, the GNWT has made adjustments within its latest offer at mediation to address issues around relief employees, lay-offs, mental health, extending parental leave, and adding leave for survivors of domestic violence.

The proposed collective agreement would result in approximately \$22,000 in total increased pay, on average, over the length of the Collective Agreement. For any individual employee that amount would vary based on their pay level and step and this excludes any pay increase that would come from obtaining a promotion during the five year period.

The GNWT believes an overall balance must be achieved in our investments given our revenue challenges among:

- incremental investments to address the needs of Northerners for programs and services,
- strategic investments to support a more sustainable future, and
- investments to support our existing programs and services, including finalizing collective agreements.

Over the past few years, the GNWT has implemented about \$100 million in reductions and revenue initiatives. Simply driving up expenditure growth in a period of low revenue growth will force the government into requiring additional adjustments.

The GNWT believes our employees and our residents want to see a balanced approach. Of course, we understand that everyone would like to receive pay increases as large as possible but we do not believe people want to see the government abandon other investments or undertake further reductions in current programs and services to achieve those increases.

Pay Impact of GNWT Offer at Mediation, by Selected Pay Levels and Starting Step

The GNWT salary grids for UNW employees contain 25 pay levels with each position being assigned to a pay level based on the results of position evaluations. Within each pay level there are eight steps. As described in the Collective Agreement Article 24.09 each employee, not at Step 8, typically receives a step increase on an annual basis.

So for example, employees at Step 1 when the last agreement expired would likely move to Step 6 by 2020-21, while employees already at Step 8 would not receive any additional step increases so would only be impacted by economic increases to the salary grid.

This table shows for various pay levels, the impact on pay over the five years of the GNWT offer at mediation from both economic increases and step increases based on what step the employee was at when the previous collective agreement expired.

Pay Level 8	No. of Employees: 376	Common Position Titles: Classroom Assistant, Resident Care Aide, Wildland Fire Crew Member														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$60,762	2	\$62,322	3	\$63,921	4	\$65,559	5	\$67,236	6	\$68,952	7	\$70,727	8	\$72,540
2016-17	2	\$62,322	3	\$63,921	4	\$65,559	5	\$67,236	6	\$68,952	7	\$70,727	8	\$72,540	8	\$72,540
2017-18	3	\$63,921	4	\$65,559	5	\$67,236	6	\$68,952	7	\$70,727	8	\$72,540	8	\$72,540	8	\$72,540
2018-19	4	\$66,476	5	\$68,192	6	\$69,947	7	\$71,741	8	\$73,593	8	\$73,593	8	\$73,593	8	\$73,593
2019-20	5	\$69,147	6	\$70,922	7	\$72,735	8	\$74,607	8	\$74,607	8	\$74,607	8	\$74,607	8	\$74,607
2020-21	6	\$72,131	7	\$73,983	8	\$75,894	8	\$75,894	8	\$75,894	8	\$75,894	8	\$75,894	8	\$75,894
Change Since 2015-16																
2016-17		\$1,560	\$1,599	\$1,638	\$1,677	\$1,716	\$1,775	\$1,814	\$0							
2017-18		\$3,159	\$3,237	\$3,315	\$3,393	\$3,491	\$3,588	\$1,814	\$0							
2018-19		\$5,714	\$5,870	\$6,026	\$6,182	\$6,357	\$4,641	\$2,867	\$1,053							
2019-20		\$8,385	\$8,600	\$8,814	\$9,048	\$7,371	\$5,655	\$3,881	\$2,067							
2020-21		\$11,369	\$11,661	\$11,973	\$10,335	\$8,658	\$6,942	\$5,168	\$3,354							
Total Increased Pay		\$30,186	\$30,966	\$31,766	\$30,635	\$27,593	\$22,601	\$15,542	\$6,474							

Pay Level 10	No. of Employees: 83	Common Position Titles: Accounting Clerk, Medical Travel Clerk, Pharmacy Technician														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$65,208	2	\$66,885	3	\$68,601	4	\$70,356	5	\$72,170	6	\$74,022	7	\$75,914	8	\$77,864
2016-17	2	\$66,885	3	\$68,601	4	\$70,356	5	\$72,170	6	\$74,022	7	\$75,914	8	\$77,864	8	\$77,864
2017-18	3	\$68,601	4	\$70,356	5	\$72,170	6	\$74,022	7	\$75,914	8	\$77,864	8	\$77,864	8	\$77,864
2018-19	4	\$71,351	5	\$73,184	6	\$75,056	7	\$76,986	8	\$78,956	8	\$78,956	8	\$78,956	8	\$78,956
2019-20	5	\$74,198	6	\$76,109	7	\$78,059	8	\$80,067	8	\$80,067	8	\$80,067	8	\$80,067	8	\$80,067
2020-21	6	\$77,396	7	\$79,385	8	\$81,432	8	\$81,432	8	\$81,432	8	\$81,432	8	\$81,432	8	\$81,432
Change Since 2015-16																
2016-17		\$1,677	\$1,716	\$1,755	\$1,814	\$1,853	\$1,892	\$1,950	\$0							
2017-18		\$3,393	\$3,471	\$3,569	\$3,666	\$3,744	\$3,842	\$1,950	\$0							
2018-19		\$6,143	\$6,299	\$6,455	\$6,630	\$6,786	\$4,934	\$3,042	\$1,092							
2019-20		\$8,990	\$9,224	\$9,458	\$9,711	\$7,898	\$6,045	\$4,154	\$2,204							
2020-21		\$12,188	\$12,500	\$12,831	\$11,076	\$9,263	\$7,410	\$5,519	\$3,569							
Total Increased Pay		\$32,390	\$33,209	\$34,067	\$32,897	\$29,543	\$24,122	\$16,614	\$6,864							

Pay Level 12	No. of Employees: 263	Common Position Titles: Corrections Officer, Licensed Practical Nurse, Plumber, Electrician														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$72,677	2	\$74,549	3	\$76,460	4	\$78,429	5	\$80,438	6	\$82,505	7	\$84,611	8	\$86,775
2016-17	2	\$74,549	3	\$76,460	4	\$78,429	5	\$80,438	6	\$82,505	7	\$84,611	8	\$86,775	8	\$86,775
2017-18	3	\$76,460	4	\$78,429	5	\$80,438	6	\$82,505	7	\$84,611	8	\$86,775	8	\$86,775	8	\$86,775
2018-19	4	\$79,521	5	\$81,569	6	\$83,675	7	\$85,820	8	\$88,023	8	\$88,023	8	\$88,023	8	\$88,023
2019-20	5	\$82,700	6	\$84,825	7	\$87,009	8	\$89,252	8	\$89,252	8	\$89,252	8	\$89,252	8	\$89,252
2020-21	6	\$86,268	7	\$88,491	8	\$90,773	8	\$90,773	8	\$90,773	8	\$90,773	8	\$90,773	8	\$90,773
Change Since 2015-16																
2016-17		\$1,872	\$1,911	\$1,970	\$2,009	\$2,067	\$2,106	\$2,165	\$0							
2017-18		\$3,783	\$3,881	\$3,978	\$4,076	\$4,173	\$4,271	\$2,165	\$0							
2018-19		\$6,845	\$7,020	\$7,215	\$7,391	\$7,586	\$5,519	\$3,413	\$1,248							
2019-20		\$10,023	\$10,277	\$10,550	\$10,823	\$8,814	\$6,747	\$4,641	\$2,477							
2020-21		\$13,592	\$13,943	\$14,313	\$12,344	\$10,335	\$8,268	\$6,162	\$3,998							
Total Increased Pay		\$36,114	\$37,031	\$38,025	\$36,641	\$32,975	\$26,910	\$18,545	\$7,722							

Pay Level 14	No. of Employees: 309	Common Position Titles: Benefits Officer, Client Service Officer, Ren. Resource Officer, Lab Technician														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$79,658	2	\$81,705	3	\$83,792	4	\$85,937	5	\$88,140	6	\$90,402	7	\$92,723	8	\$95,102
2016-17	2	\$81,705	3	\$83,792	4	\$85,937	5	\$88,140	6	\$90,402	7	\$92,723	8	\$95,102	8	\$95,102
2017-18	3	\$83,792	4	\$85,937	5	\$88,140	6	\$90,402	7	\$92,723	8	\$95,102	8	\$95,102	8	\$95,102
2018-19	4	\$87,146	5	\$89,388	6	\$91,689	7	\$94,049	8	\$96,467	8	\$96,467	8	\$96,467	8	\$96,467
2019-20	5	\$90,656	6	\$92,976	7	\$95,375	8	\$97,832	8	\$97,832	8	\$97,832	8	\$97,832	8	\$97,832
2020-21	6	\$94,536	7	\$96,974	8	\$99,470	8	\$99,470	8	\$99,470	8	\$99,470	8	\$99,470	8	\$99,470

Change Since 2015-16

2016-17		\$2,048	\$2,087	\$2,145	\$2,204	\$2,262	\$2,321	\$2,379	\$0
2017-18		\$4,134	\$4,232	\$4,349	\$4,466	\$4,583	\$4,700	\$2,379	\$0
2018-19		\$7,488	\$7,683	\$7,898	\$8,112	\$8,327	\$6,065	\$3,744	\$1,365
2019-20		\$10,998	\$11,271	\$11,583	\$11,895	\$9,692	\$7,430	\$5,109	\$2,730
2020-21		\$14,879	\$15,269	\$15,678	\$13,533	\$11,330	\$9,068	\$6,747	\$4,368
Total Increased Pay		\$39,546	\$40,541	\$41,652	\$40,209	\$36,192	\$29,582	\$20,358	\$8,463

Pay Level 16	No. of Employees: 597	Common Position Titles: Registered Nurse, Probation Officer, Info. Systems Analyst, Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$87,263	2	\$89,505	3	\$91,806	4	\$94,166	5	\$96,584	6	\$99,060	7	\$101,595	8	\$104,208
2016-17	2	\$89,505	3	\$91,806	4	\$94,166	5	\$96,584	6	\$99,060	7	\$101,595	8	\$104,208	8	\$104,208
2017-18	3	\$91,806	4	\$94,166	5	\$96,584	6	\$99,060	7	\$101,595	8	\$104,208	8	\$104,208	8	\$104,208
2018-19	4	\$95,511	5	\$97,968	6	\$100,484	7	\$103,058	8	\$105,710	8	\$105,710	8	\$105,710	8	\$105,710
2019-20	5	\$99,314	6	\$101,868	7	\$104,481	8	\$107,172	8	\$107,172	8	\$107,172	8	\$107,172	8	\$107,172
2020-21	6	\$103,604	7	\$106,275	8	\$109,005	8	\$109,005	8	\$109,005	8	\$109,005	8	\$109,005	8	\$109,005

Change Since 2015-16

2016-17		\$2,243	\$2,301	\$2,360	\$2,418	\$2,477	\$2,535	\$2,613	\$0
2017-18		\$4,544	\$4,661	\$4,778	\$4,895	\$5,012	\$5,148	\$2,613	\$0
2018-19		\$8,249	\$8,463	\$8,678	\$8,892	\$9,126	\$6,650	\$4,115	\$1,502
2019-20		\$12,051	\$12,363	\$12,675	\$13,007	\$10,589	\$8,112	\$5,577	\$2,964
2020-21		\$16,341	\$16,770	\$17,199	\$14,840	\$12,422	\$9,945	\$7,410	\$4,797
Total Increased Pay		\$43,427	\$44,558	\$45,689	\$44,051	\$39,624	\$32,390	\$22,328	\$9,263

Pay Level 18	No. of Employees: 456	Common Position Titles: Adult Educator, Community Health Nurse, Program or Policy Analyst, Project Officer, Financial Analyst														
2015-16 Step & Pay	1	\$95,589	2	\$98,046	3	\$100,562	4	\$103,136	5	\$105,788	6	\$108,498	7	\$111,287	8	\$114,134
2016-17	2	\$98,046	3	\$100,562	4	\$103,136	5	\$105,788	6	\$108,498	7	\$111,287	8	\$114,134	8	\$114,134
2017-18	3	\$100,562	4	\$103,136	5	\$105,788	6	\$108,498	7	\$111,287	8	\$114,134	8	\$114,134	8	\$114,134
2018-19	4	\$104,598	5	\$107,289	6	\$110,039	7	\$112,866	8	\$115,772	8	\$115,772	8	\$115,772	8	\$115,772
2019-20	5	\$108,810	6	\$111,599	7	\$114,465	8	\$117,410	8	\$117,410	8	\$117,410	8	\$117,410	8	\$117,410
2020-21	6	\$113,510	7	\$116,435	8	\$119,418	8	\$119,418	8	\$119,418	8	\$119,418	8	\$119,418	8	\$119,418

Change Since 2015-16

2016-17		\$2,457	\$2,516	\$2,574	\$2,652	\$2,711	\$2,789	\$2,847	\$0
2017-18		\$4,973	\$5,090	\$5,226	\$5,363	\$5,499	\$5,636	\$2,847	\$0
2018-19		\$9,009	\$9,243	\$9,477	\$9,731	\$9,984	\$7,274	\$4,485	\$1,638
2019-20		\$13,221	\$13,553	\$13,904	\$14,274	\$11,622	\$8,912	\$6,123	\$3,276
2020-21		\$17,921	\$18,389	\$18,857	\$16,283	\$13,631	\$10,920	\$8,132	\$5,285
Total Increased Pay		\$47,580	\$48,789	\$50,037	\$48,302	\$43,446	\$35,529	\$24,434	\$10,199