

Edmonton Garrison home to first unionized military daycare ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

A vote held last week determined the Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Society will become the first unionized military daycare in Canada.

Employees of the society voted 13-4 in favour of joining the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). CUPE was approached by several employees of the Edmonton Garrison MFRS in August, at which time the organization and application process started, resulting in last week's vote.

"Their reasons for joining and the reasons supported in the unionizing drive were that they wanted their wages to be on par with other certified daycare workers and they currently feel they are not on par," said Lou Arab, communications representative at CUPE.

Although employees have voted in favour of joining the union, the first contract has yet to be created, a process that can be time consuming.

"Now that there is a union in place, we have the right to bargain for the workers. We will meet with the employees and canvas with members for what they think should be in the collective agreement," said Arab, who said discussions with employer and employees will begin as soon as possible.

As the first unionized military daycare in Canada, Arab suggested this case could set a precedent for other military daycares seeking wage parity and fair treatment.

As Canada's largest union, CUPE represents child care workers across the country.

Edmonton Garrison MFRS is a non-profit agency based in Lancaster Park, north of Edmonton, which provides programs and services to Canadian Forces families.

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