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| Arbitration awards: Minister Toews January 31, 2020 [Media inquiries](#media-contacts)Finance Minister Travis Toews issued the following statement on three arbitration decisions involving the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE).“Today, a provincial board of arbitration awarded no increase to Auxiliary Nursing Care workers, a one per cent increase to Alberta Public Service workers and a one per cent increase to health care workers in General Support Services.“This binding arbitration process agreed to by the previous government resulted in public sector wage decisions that further challenge the urgent need to fix Alberta’s overspending problem while ensuring the long-term sustainability of high quality public services Albertans rely on.“These increases - while much less than the 6.5 per cent to nearly eight per cent increases the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees was seeking - will mean an additional $35 million annual expenditure for public sector compensation. As indicated in the last budget, there is no new money for public sector raises over the course of our fiscal plan.“As a result of these decisions government will need to consider additional steps to balance our budget and get our fiscal house in order. These unfortunately include the potential for adjustments to workforce levels, as well as finding efficiencies in program service delivery.“As the MacKinnon panel identified, public sector compensation makes up more than half of government expenses and in many cases wages are substantially higher than other large provinces.“We remain steadfast. We will not ask Alberta taxpayers to further fund public sector raises when far too many workers in the private sector have lost their jobs or have seen significant cuts in their wages.“Wage restraint will be of paramount importance as we enter into new collective bargaining negotiations in 2020.“We have a great deal of respect and admiration for Alberta’s public sector workers who deliver so many of the vital services Albertans rely on. The need for restraint does not diminish our recognition of the hard work they do for Albertans, but government is expected to be responsible stewards of the public’s tax dollars and get our province’s finances under control.”Media inquiriesJerrica Goodwin 780-988-3278Press Secretary, Treasury Board and Finance |
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