



HELP BY SIGNING THE PETITION AT
SOUNDINGTHEALARM.CA



For Immediate Release

B.C.'s paramedic union "Sounding The Alarm" in new campaign for contract **Another troubling ambulance wait-time incident in South Surrey**

Richmond, B.C. – November 2, 2022 – More than 11,262 people have signed a petition demanding the B.C. government fix the province's ailing ambulance service.

The petition is part of a new media and public awareness campaign by B.C.'s ambulance paramedics and emergency dispatchers who are "Sounding The Alarm" as they negotiate for a new collective agreement.

"It's encouraging to see so many people around the province signing this petition", said BC Ambulance Paramedics and Dispatchers President Troy Clifford. Like us, people are very worried about how long it will take to get urgent medical help, or if an ambulance is even available in their community", said Clifford.

October 19th, another person in B.C. experienced the unfortunate reality of ambulance wait times. The 70-year-old Crescent Beach woman slipped and fell, breaking her leg. In excruciating pain, she waited more than four hours for ambulance paramedics to arrive.

When contract talks began in October, the union representing paramedics warned if a critical staff shortage and burnout among staff aren't immediately addressed, the service may not survive.

The union is pushing for an agreement that addresses issues with recruiting and attracting trained paramedics. "We are *Sounding The Alarm* in the midst of an unprecedented staffing crisis, ambulances are sitting empty across the province, and we are seeing the effects of understaffing and poor wages now more than ever," said Clifford.

“We are bringing real solutions to the bargaining table and what we believe can fix the ambulance service and set us on a path forward where we can finally recruit and retain staff”.

Negotiations are expected to continue through the fall.

Paramedics and Dispatchers are underpaid for the critical work they provide

Did you know that Paramedics are paid, on average AT LEAST 30% less than all other First Responders and many health care professionals? This makes recruitment very hard, and we are seeing paramedics leave our profession in droves. Most Paramedics working in rural and remote areas are paid ONLY \$2 an hour to carry a pager in an outdated, On Call model, which is not a living wage. These wage disparities make it so we cannot compete with police, fire or nurses when it comes to recruiting staff.

We have dire mental health and wellness impacts

Over 30% of our staff are either off work getting treatment for PTSD or are still working while trying to get help. Our daily workloads are the highest in Canada and coupled with the staffing crisis – we are at a breaking point. Our members need investments in Mental Health and Wellness funding for injuries suffered as a result of the job. We need to support our Paramedics and Dispatchers as they work in these unprecedented times and help them get healthy so they can transition back to work.

To sign the petition, go to soundingthealarm.ca

Share your support on instagram using [#SoundingTheAlarm](https://www.instagram.com/SoundingTheAlarm)

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Please visit our website at www.apbc.ca for more information.

