

Workers' Action Network NL

St. John's, NL  
(709) 771-0024  
contact@workersactionnl.ca

Bell Island Community Development Housing Corporation  
P.O. Box 8700  
Confederation Building  
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

30 June 2023

**RE: Heather Blanchard Employment**

To the Board of Directors of the Bell Island Community Development Housing Corporation:

The Workers' Action Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (WAN) is once again writing to express extreme concern upon learning that Heather Blanchard's contract of services has ended without an opportunity for her to negotiate a good, fair employment contract after she dedicated the last twelve years of her career providing a safe and secure living environment for the tenants of Bell Island Senior's Complex. As your organization has a mandate to provide subsidized housing to low-income Bell Island residents, a loss of a worker's employment income under your organization's watch should have been prevented at all costs.

On June 14, 2023, WAN forwarded letters of reference and positive reviews of Ms. Blanchard's performance from relatives of family members, past BICDHC board members, public service providers and contractors to your organization; as well as a separate set of signatures from the same tenants validating that they wanted Ms. Blanchard for the job. As you're aware, we conducted petitions after your lack of response- which totalled 377 signatures from concerned individuals from Newfoundland and Labrador and beyond, including at least 49 Bell Island community residents and 16 of 17 tenants of the Bell Island Senior's Complex.

Our public communications outlined that Ms. Blanchard, in protest, did not place a bid on the advertised position of Janitor/Maintenance. The reason for her action is that the job title and description do not, as advertised, reflect the full scope of duties and responsibilities that were placed upon Ms. Blanchard over the years. Having to submit a bid against her own prior contract under the conditions we have exposed in this case is unacceptable as well and also cause for protest.

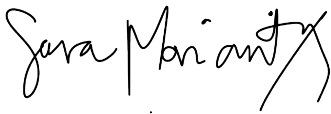
As communicated in our request of June 14, 2023, to meet with your organization, this employment issue does not just concern Ms. Blanchard's safety and mental and economic well-being. It also very much concerns the health and safety of the vulnerable tenants living at the Bell Island Senior's Complex. Your organization is responsible for the well-being of those tenants. Despite that, Heather frequently found herself caring for them with little or no support from your organization.

We have attached the petition signatures to this document to signal that your decision goes against the wishes of hundreds of residents of the province– many of whom are Bell Island community members including an overwhelming majority of the Complex's tenants.

WAN also communicated in our previous letter to your organization that we are seriously concerned for the successful bidder on the Janitor/Maintenance position, due to the many risks they face as evidenced by Ms. Blanchard's experience. Our organization's mandate is to provide a collective voice and organizing resource to workers in such a position, and we will gladly provide support to any worker who is negatively impacted by your organization's negligence.

Along with Ms. Blanchard and her many supporters, WAN will continue to use all available means to support low-wage workers subject to precarious working conditions under the Bell Island Community Development Housing Corporation. We again invite you to reach out to us in order to work out a fair and equitable outcome for Ms. Blanchard.

Sincerely,



Sara Moriarity  
Community Organizer  
+1 (709) 771-0024  
[contact@workersactionnl.ca](mailto:contact@workersactionnl.ca)



Matthew Furlong  
Board Secretary  
[contact@workersactionnl.ca](mailto:contact@workersactionnl.ca)