



## TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION No. 31

AFFILIATED WITH TEAMSTERS CANADA AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS  
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# TEAMSTERS LOCAL 31 WINS MAJOR LEGAL VICTORY AGAINST PUROLATOR

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In a landmark decision, the B.C. Supreme Court has upheld a labour arbitrator's ruling that Purolator must compensate Teamster members who were placed on unpaid leave or terminated during the COVID-19 pandemic. This ruling delivers a decisive victory for Teamsters Local 31 and a powerful message to employers across Canada—workers' rights cannot be trampled on without consequences.

Purolator implemented its "safer workplaces policy" in September 2021, effectively forcing employees who chose not to receive the newly developed vaccine to either leave work without pay or have their contracts suspended. The Teamsters Union, standing firm in defence of workers' rights, filed numerous grievances, arguing that Purolator's vaccination mandate was unreasonable and unjust.

In December 2023, labour arbitrator Nicholas Glass ruled in favour of Teamsters Local 31, ordering Purolator to compensate affected union members with lost wages and benefits. The company, unwilling to accept accountability for its actions, launched a legal challenge to overturn the arbitrator's decision. But on Monday, the B.C. Supreme Court rejected Purolator's arguments, affirming that the decision was legally sound and just.

"I find there was no procedural unfairness to Purolator," stated Justice Bradford Smith in his ruling.

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The Court further confirmed that the arbitrator acted reasonably when he determined that Purolator's vaccine mandate became unjustified as of June 30, 2022, when it was clear that vaccination no longer prevented transmission of the virus. Despite this, Purolator failed to adjust its policy in a timely manner, maintaining a requirement that was no longer necessary and unfairly punishing workers. The company finally dropped the mandate in April 2023, but not before forcing many employees out of work for months.

The Supreme Court rejected Purolator's arguments that the arbitrator erred by prioritizing individual autonomy and bodily integrity in his ruling. Justice Smith ruled that the arbitrator's decision was "transparent, intelligible, and justified," and dismissed Purolator's challenge in its entirety.

"This is a massive win for workers everywhere in Canada," said Teamsters Local 31 President Stan Hennessy. "From day one, we fought for our members, and the courts have confirmed what we knew all along—Purolator had no right to strip workers of their jobs and livelihoods."

The ruling sends a strong message to employers that they cannot impose unjust mandates without consequences. The Teamsters will always stand up for workers' rights and fight back against corporate overreach. This victory reaffirms that when workers stand together, justice prevails.

Teamsters Local Union No. 31 proudly represents more than 8,600 hard-working members in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, including general truck drivers and industrial mechanics, courier, parcel and package handlers, public services, clerical, warehouse and grocery workers, transit, coach, school bus drivers and monitors, lumber, pulp and paper workers and limousine chauffeurs, since 1936.