



# MOTION REGARDING REFERENDUM QUESTION ON AN INCREASE TO THE MCGILL STUDENTS' NIGHTLINE SERVICE FEE 2021-10-28

Submitted for: 2021-10-28

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council      **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2021-10-28-007

**Moved by:** Nathan Claret  
Services Representative      **Current Status:**  FOR APPROVAL  
 APPROVED  
 POSTPONED  
 COMMITTED  
 NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** Eric Sader  
Vice President (Finance)

## Issue

McGill Students' Nightline ("The Nightline") is seeking an increase of \$0.55 per semester (excluding summer) to our funding via the Referral Services Fee, to enable the Executive Team to be compensated for their work.

The crucial importance of maintaining student access to mental health resources has only been underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Nightline has continued to serve the McGill community by providing support, referrals, and information throughout this time and we hope to continue to do so. In order to maintain our high standard of service, we are seeking an increase to our allotted fee so that the Executive Team may be compensated for work done to keep The Nightline operational.

## Background and Rationale

There is significant precedent for increasing our fee to \$1.15 per semester (from the current \$0.60 per semester) in order to compensate the Executive Team for their work. Listed below are the current fees for other support-based and community-oriented organizations which already compensate their Executives:

- MSERT (\$1.50)
- SACOMSS (\$1.75)
- Eating Disorder Centre (\$0.90)



- Queer McGill (\$1.10)

**The adoption of this motion is crucial to both the short- and long-term success of The Nightline**, as the Service currently requires hundreds of hours of unpaid work per semester solely in order to operate at its normal level. Furthermore, the long-term growth of the organization requires innovative ideas and leadership, as evidenced by the adoption of a Chatline in recent years and the flexibility required to operate the Service throughout the COVID-19 shutdowns. The adoption of compensation will enable such innovations to continue by fostering a sustainable culture of anti-oppression within the organization.

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### Alignment with Mission

This motion aligns with the SSMU Mission to provide outstanding services to the McGill community. This motion also aligns with The Nightline's constitution and mandate, and has received unanimous approval within the organization.

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### Consultations Completed

Consultations were conducted with the Vice-President (Finance) 2020-2021, the Vice-President (Student Life) 2020-2021, the Vice-President (Finance) 2021-2022, the Vice-President (Student Life) 2021-2022, the SSMU Human Resources Department, the SSMU Services Representative VP (Student Life) 2021-2022, and representatives from The Nightline.

These consultations resulted in the creation of a plan for compensation of the Executive Team which received unanimous approval within The Nightline.

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### Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Should this motion not pass, The Nightline will not be able to compensate its Executive Team for their work. The number of unpaid hours currently required of the Executive Team is unsustainable and jeopardizes the future of the organization. Moreover, the current levels of unpaid work required to keep the Service operational conflicts with the values of anti-oppression that both The Nightline and the SSMU espouse. **Should this motion not pass, the unsustainability of reliance upon unpaid work will continue to jeopardize the short- and long-term availability of the Service.**

Should this motion pass, The Nightline will adjust its budget in accordance with a plan for the allocation of compensation that has been created in

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collaboration with the SSMU and has received unanimous internal approval within The Nightline.

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## Sustainability Considerations

The compensation of The Nightline Executive Team would enable the long-term success of The Nightline as a support service offered to the McGill community. Compensating The Executive would also enable The Nightline to adhere to a community-oriented anti-oppression model of operation, by resolving the issue of necessitating that our Executive Team perform unpaid work solely to keep our service running. Moreover, in addition to maintaining our high standards of service in both the short- and long-term, the adoption of this motion will enable us to explore additional options of expansion which are currently impossible given the unpaid workload currently faced by the Executive Team.

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## Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If the proposed resolution is approved, the question would be included in the Fall 2021 Referendum Period by Elections SSMU and sent to the Membership for approval.

If the question is approved by the Membership, the fee increase will go into effect as of Winter 2022 semester. The unanimously approved compensation plan made in collaboration with the SSMU will then be enacted.

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## Motion or Resolution for Approval

Whereas, The Nightline Executive Team is not currently compensated for their work;

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Fall 2021 referendum period:

*Do you agree to the increase of the opt-outable Referral Services Fee of \$3.97 per semester by \$0.55 per semester (excluding summer), payable by SSMU Members starting in Winter 2022 and ending in Fall 2026 (inclusive), at which point it will be brought back to the Membership for renewal? A majority 'no' vote will result in the continuation of the fee at its current rate, preventing the compensation of Nightline executives for their work.*

Be it further resolved, a budget must be included as an appendix to the ballot in the event of both a "yes" or "no" result.



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**Results of the  
Vote**

In favour	(22)
Opposed	(0)
Abstain	(1)

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APPROVED