

OPSEU Accommodation Policy

Approved May 2012

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, OPSEU is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and that is free of barriers based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, and disability.
- 1.2 The duty to accommodate applies to all the grounds listed in 1.1. The goal of accommodation is to allow OPSEU members to benefit equally from and take part in union-related activities and functions.

2.0 General Principles and Application

- 2.1 OPSEU commits to providing accommodation for needs related to the grounds listed in 1.1, unless to do so would cause undue hardship. Members may seek accommodation where OPSEU's requirements, policies or practices interfere with those members' ability to participate fully in union-related activities and functions.
- 2.2 OPSEU's decisions regarding accommodation will be guided by the following general principles:
 - a) The essence of accommodation is that each case is considered and assessed on an individual basis;
 - b) Appropriate accommodation best promotes integration and full participation of all members;
 - c) The dignity of the member is a primary consideration in deciding appropriate accommodation; and
 - d) Accommodation requests and measures will be confidential to the extent possible.
- 2.3 Examples of appropriate accommodation are creating materials in alternate formats (e.g. large print, audio tape and Braille), providing sign language interpretation, approving single room accommodation, approving extra caregiving costs and approving arrangements for breastfeeding. These measures will vary and each case must be assessed on an individual basis.
- 2.4 Members may direct any requests for accommodation to the Equity Unit. The Equity Unit will provide recommendations to the OPSEU Unit or Regional Office organizing the applicable union-related activity or function.. The Unit or Regional Office is responsible and accountable for providing accommodation in accordance with this policy.
- 2.5 It is understood that members may be required to provide information to substantiate an accommodation request. Any information provided will be kept in strict confidence within the Equity Unit.

2.6 If a member believes that an accommodation request is denied contrary to this Policy and the *Code*, they may contact an Advisor under the *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy* (HDPP) who may act as the member's advocate. The member may also contact the Unit or Regional Office responsible for the decision or the Equity Unit directly. Members are encouraged to try to address any concerns about their accommodation request through informal discussion before filing a complaint under the HDPP.

3.0 Accommodation Fund

3.1 A central Accommodation Fund was created in 2002. This Fund will continue to be a separate line item in OPSEU's annual budget and it will be administered by the Equity Unit. The central Fund will only cover approved accommodation expenses for Locals, regional events, Provincial Committees and Caucuses.

3.3 Accommodation expenses for an event will be paid only for members whose other expenses for that event are being paid by OPSEU.

4.0 Education

4.1 OPSEU is committed to adopting a preventive strategy that is based on education. To that end, the Union shall:

- a) provide educational material on accommodation to Local Presidents;
- b) post the Accommodation Policy and educational material on the OPSEU website.