

NEW PRESIDENTS Getting Started



TOOLKIT

Local Presidents Toolkit

Last updated Aug 2026

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Welcome

Congratulations and thank you for accepting the challenge of becoming a new Local President.

Your members have elected you because they have confidence in your ability to represent them and the Local. The thought of being a new Local President can be exciting and overwhelming at times. Please be assured that you are not expected to perform miracles, nor is it assumed that you know everything about labour relations.

This Getting Started Toolkit is designed to help you get organized so you can focus your energy on the tasks ahead. The materials in this kit have been drawn from suggestions of new Local Presidents like yourself.

Every person who becomes a Local President brings their own set of skills and experiences to the role. Some of the information in this kit might be familiar, but some might not. We've tried to include enough information so that you can develop a comfort level fairly quickly.

Always remember that you have other Local Executive Members, Stewards, OPSEU/SEFPO staff, and your Executive Board Members you can call on when issues arise, and you need assistance.

This Getting Started Toolkit, along with the resource modules, will provide you with the basics. OPSEU/SEFPO head office offers a full multi-day training course for Local Presidents. We strongly urge you to apply to get into the course the next time it is offered. Keep watching the OPSEU/SEFPO website or call your OPSEU/SEFPO regional office to find out when the next course is being offered.

Getting Started

Local President Getting Started Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you pull together the information and documents you need to be effective in your new position. Check off the items that you have gathered. Put question marks beside or highlight the items you're not sure about, need more information on or would like to discuss further.

Set Up a Place To Work

- ☐ Secure computer and printer to use for union business
- ☐ Secure e-mail address for union business
- ☐ Identify a physical and/or digital filing cabinet as your Local filing system (e.g., file folders, accordion files)

Do you have a Local union office? If yes,

- ☐ Identify a phone, desk, chairs, office supplies, and other Local union supplies

Note: OPSEU/SEFPO supplies can be ordered through your Regional Office

Gather Information About Your Local

- ☐ Workplaces that are represented by your Local
- ☐ Types of jobs your Local members do
- ☐ Contact information of your Local Executive Committee (LEC) and Stewards
- ☐ Copies of the minutes of the last General Membership Meeting (GMM)
- ☐ Names and contact information for your Local's committees (both Local and Joint with the employer)
- ☐ Minutes of past committee meetings
- ☐ Copies of your Local's Trustee Audit Reports (TARs)
- ☐ Whether your Local has completed and submitted its TARs, which are required at least once every six months
- ☐ Copies of the Collective Agreement(s) that cover your members in your Local
- ☐ Copy of your Local Bylaws (if your Local has Bylaws)
- ☐ Copy of your Local's budget or financial reports to the membership
- ☐ Current information about the active grievances in your Local

Gather OPSEU/SEFPO Information

- ☐ Contact information for your OPSEU/SEFPO Staff Representative and Regional Office support person/s
- ☐ Where your OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Office and/or Membership Centre is located
- ☐ Name and contact information for your 3 Regional Executive Board Members (EBM's)

- ___ Number for your OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Office.
- ___ Number for OPSEU/SEFPO Head Office: 1-800-268-7376
- ___ OPSEU/SEFPO website: <http://www.opseu.org/>
- ___ Copy of the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution. If not, do you know where/how to get one?

Name and contact information of your Regional Representative on the following provincial equity committees and caucuses:

- ___ Provincial Human Rights Committee
- ___ Provincial Women's Committee
- ___ Provincial Young Workers Committee
- ___ Provincial Francophone Committee
- ___ Indigenous Circle
- ___ Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel
- ___ Coalition of Racialized Workers
- ___ Disability Rights Caucus
- ___ Jewish Caucus

Local Connections to the Labour Movement and Community

- ___ Whether the Local is affiliated with an OPSEU/SEFPO Area Council
- ___ Affiliated with the Local Labour Council
- ___ If affiliated, contact information of the person(s) who represent your Local
- ___ Contact list for community organizations that your Local has connections with

Take These Actions in Your First Month

- ___ Fill out the Local Executive Contact Information form
- ___ Send Contact Information to the LEC, Stewards and the Regional Office
- ___ Notify relevant employers of the Local's election results

In consultation with your Local Executive Committee (LEC):

- ___ Set date, time and location for your first LEC meeting
- ___ Set an agenda for your first meeting
- ___ Set up a meeting with your OPSEU/SEFPO Staff Representative



Local Executive Contact Information

The following information is required in order to contact your LEC when necessary.

Please complete this form, circulate it to your LEC and forward the completed form to your Regional Secretary.

LOCAL # _____ Single Unit ☐ Multi or Composite ☐

Units in your Local (if multi or composite)

_____	_____
_____	_____

Regional Office: _____

Staff Rep: _____

Date of Election of Officers (General Membership Meeting) _____

Officer Names	Mailing Address	E-Mails	Telephones
President:			
Vice-President:			
Secretary:			
Treasurer:			
Chief Steward:			
Unit/Shop Steward:			
Unit/Shop Steward:			
Unit/Shop Steward:			
Unit/Shop Steward:			
Health & Safety Rep			
Trustee:			
Trustee:			

Local Meetings

Why Good Local Meetings Matter

Have you ever attended a union meeting where:

- Only a few people knew each other, and it stayed that way?
- One person (the President) did all the talking?
- There was no clear agenda or order of business?
- There was no interaction with or between the people attending the meeting?
- People left not knowing why they came and vowing never to come again?

If the truth were told, some of us have even run a few meetings like that. As activists, we often complain that people don't come to meetings because they don't care. What may be true is that our meetings don't give people a reason to come.

This section of your Toolkit is designed to ensure that your meetings:

- Energize and build a sense of community and belonging to the union
- Deal with topics of interest even to apathetic members
- Help you make decisions required to take necessary action in the Local
- Draw on the skills and interests of a growing group of Local activists

Local Executive Committee (LEC) Meetings

Your OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution says (Article **29.2.2**) "The Local executive committee shall administer the affairs of the Local in accordance with this Constitution, the bylaws of the Local and the wishes of the members of the Local.

The committee shall meet at least once every three months. The Local President may call a committee meeting at any time to deal with business of an urgent nature."

One of the first things you should do as a new Local President is to call your LEC together to decide how you will work together and to agree on the work. Here's a checklist for preparing for, running and following up on your LEC meetings.

Local Executive Committee Meeting Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan and run your first Local Executive Committee meeting. Note: You can share these tasks with other LEC members. Put a check mark in the done section when you've completed each task.

Steps	Done
Before the meeting (starting 2 weeks ahead) Check Local bylaws for any meeting requirements. Contact each LEC member to set up a date, time, and place, and to define the agenda items, any required accommodations, and the roles people will play in preparing and running the meeting. In particular, find out who needs to report and who wants to speak to a particular item. Ensure the proposed location is accessible and has the required furniture and equipment. Arrange food if the meeting is at a normal mealtime. Confirm logistics and circulate the minutes from the last meeting and the draft agenda to all LEC members. Invite OPSEU/SEFPO Staff Rep. (if necessary). Pull together any documents (minutes, reports, resolutions, letters, etc.) required by the agenda. Set up the room in advance, especially if using a flipchart or audiovisual equipment.	
At the meeting Greet everyone and ensure everyone knows each other's names before the meeting starts. Start the meeting by welcoming people with a Land Acknowledgement and reading the Statement of Respect (access the OPSEU/SEFPO Event Guide for guidance) Ask each person to introduce themselves, their name, job and unit, and one thing they would like to contribute to the Local through work on the LEC. This is important information for leaders to have about one another, and it builds a sense of shared purpose among leaders. Review the agenda (about 5 minutes) and identify:	

- Ending time
- Which items are information sharing, and which require a decision
- Approximate times for each item

Amend the agenda with everyone's input.

Review minutes of the last meeting (about 10 minutes)

You're reviewing these for 2 reasons: to ensure they're a correct record, and as a basis for following up on decisions and actions taken last time.

- Briefly review (people should have read this ahead of time)
- Ask for any corrections or clarifications
- Secretary (or whoever did the minutes) moves acceptance of minutes; ask for someone to second the motion; vote
- Review decisions recorded in the minutes and get brief updates on the action taken, obstacles, and what else is required
- Summarize any further decisions or actions required and suggest where these might be taken up in this agenda

For each agenda item, e.g., recruiting new Stewards, planning for the next GMM, etc., work with LEC members to:

- Summarize where this item came from – evidence of need
- Summarize what's been done so far (good place to hear reports, etc.)
- Lead a discussion to identify the next steps
- Identify what items must go to the membership for discussion (e.g., increased budget; help with recruitment); develop a motion if it requires a membership vote
- Decide who will do what by when
- Ensure all decisions are recorded in the minutes.

At the end of the meeting (about 10 minutes before the agreed-upon adjournment)

- Review decisions taken at the meeting and who has agreed to do what
- Review items still requiring discussion
- Identify how these items will be addressed (develop a proposal for discussion, a conference call, etc.)
- Agree on next meeting date and time and roles for that meeting (e.g., rotating chair)
- Thank everyone for their participation and good work together

Follow-up to Act on Decisions (within 2 weeks of meeting)

Ensure minutes are sent to LEC members within 2 weeks of the meeting.

Call and email LEC members to see how they're doing, whether they're encountering any obstacles to the actions they've undertaken, and whether they need any help.

Brief Staff Rep. (if unable to attend the LEC meeting) on the key outcomes of the meeting and any support you need from them.

Do what you said you would do.

Steps to an Effective General Membership Meeting (GMM)

What should a General Membership Meeting try to do?

You've had your LEC meeting and done some of the necessary preparation for an effective General Membership Meeting. But there's a bit more to do. Remember, you want your membership meeting to:

- Energize and build a sense of community and belonging to the union
- Deal with topics of interest even to apathetic members
- Make decisions required to take necessary action in the Local
- Draw on the skills and interests of a growing group of Local activists.

Make the agenda interesting

Your OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution, Article 29.7.2 (or your Local bylaw) outlines the standard agenda for your General Membership Meeting. It's a good list to ensure that everyone gets heard and things get done. However, for someone not involved in the union, this agenda may sound dull and may not attract them to a meeting. Here are a couple of tips:

- Highlight an issue you want the meeting to focus on (e.g., "a union take on accommodation"; "welcoming temp workers to the union"; etc.). Ensure that at least 1/3 to 1/2 of the meeting addresses this.
- Shorten reports (i.e., 1 page each with a few key points; limit each report to 1 minute unless there's a decision the membership needs to make).
- Make agenda headings for reports interesting. Rather than "committee reports", the agenda could read, "upcoming education in the Local"; "human rights are workers' rights"; "it's bargaining time", etc.
- Spread discussion and decision-making throughout the meeting rather than leaving it to the end ("new business") when people are most tired.
- Serve food and highlight the chance to get to know people.

Publicize the meeting(s)

- Prepare an attractive flyer that highlights how interesting the meeting will be.
- Distribute the flyer by hand through the Stewards or information Stewards.
- Ensure that all activists bring someone new to the meeting.
- Use the phone tree (1 person calls 5 other people) to encourage people to come.
- Post the flyer throughout the workplace(s).

General Membership Meeting Planning Checklist

Steps Before the Meeting Discussion with the Local Executive	Time
Prepare the logistics of the meeting • Review Local bylaws to ensure you are meeting all requirements. • Agree on a meeting location – ensure location is accessible (by transit, wheelchair); room is suitable for the size of the meeting; chairs and equipment are available. • Identify the issue of most interest to uninformed parts of the membership – e.g., part-time issues; shift allocations, etc. • Agree on how this issue will be addressed at the meeting – e.g., film, speaker, survey results and discussion (allow 30 to 60 minutes of the meeting for this). • Agree on how to deal with the business meeting in 45 to 60 minutes, maximum. • Finalize agenda headings. • Agree on dates and time(s) for the meeting(s). More than one meeting may need to be scheduled due to work schedules. • Arrange for food/snacks and beverages. • Set up childcare arrangements. • Design and print meeting flyers that excite people about the meeting. • Post meeting notices on union bulletin boards. • Distribute flyers in person through Stewards, by email, etc. • Invite the Staff Rep. and Executive Board Members to attend. • Ensure you have all necessary equipment, including a ballot box and a supply of ballots if needed for the meeting. • Pull together necessary documentation and materials for the meeting. • Brief the speaker/resource person/ facilitator if using one. Be sure to check Local bylaws. If changes to Local bylaws are required, special notice to the membership must be given.	2 weeks before the meeting
Identify who will do what The Local President should not be the focus of the entire meeting. • Share tasks at the meeting amongst LEC members (including greeters, who will move which motion, Secretary/minute taker, etc.). • Each LEC member should bring two new people to the meeting – people who have never attended a union meeting.	1 week before the meeting
At the Meeting (Article 29.7 of the Constitution)	Time
Set up the room prior to members arriving • Set up a table for the LEC to work from.	

• Flip chart and or audio/visual equipment you may be using. • Set up chairs in a semi-circle so that the room is inviting and that people can see each other as well as LEC members. • Put meeting materials on chairs.	
Have Greeters welcome people • Do not be afraid to introduce yourself to people coming, and help people to meet each other. It creates a climate of inclusion, which is helpful for a productive meeting.	
Ensure the meeting has quorum • Prior to the meeting, check that you know what quorum is in Article 29.8.2 of the Constitution. • Before you start the meeting, check that you have quorum.	
Chair welcomes members, calls the meeting to order • Aim to start the meeting on time. • Provide a Land Acknowledgement. • Welcome everyone. • Have people identify themselves as you call their worksite/unit. • Welcome any new members to the meeting and the Local. This is an opportunity to recognize members who are attending a Local meeting for the first time. • Ask the Stewards and the officers of the LEC to introduce themselves.	5 minutes
Read the OPSEU/SEFPO Statement of Respect or have a couple of different people read different paragraphs • The Statement of Respect (SoR) can be downloaded from the OPSEU/SEFPO website. • You can also play the SoR video.	3 minutes
Adopt the Agenda • The Agenda should have been sent out before the meeting. • Post the agenda on a screen/ flip chart during the meeting or give members a handout at the meeting that could include the agenda, previous minutes, Treasurer's report, etc.	5 minutes
Minutes of the previous meeting (to be done by the Secretary) • If you have had a previous meeting, hand out copies of the minutes when members come to the meeting, or you can read the minutes. • Ask for any corrections or clarifications of the minutes. • Have the Secretary move a motion to accept the minutes. • Ask for someone to second the motion.	5 minutes

• Vote; if accepted, the minutes are adopted.	
Business arising from the last meeting • Are there any items that need to be dealt with from the last meeting before proceeding? • Did any items from the last meeting result in something else needing to be done? If so, suggest a place for this in the meeting's agenda.	5 minutes
Treasurer's Report (to be done by the Treasurer) • The Treasurer's report is about how we are spending the Local's money for the benefit of members and the Local. • Distribute the Treasurer's report (not more than 2 pages) and ask the Treasurer to draw people's attention to the 3 or 4 most important items in the report. • Ask members if they have any questions about the report. • Have the Treasurer move a motion to accept the report. • Ask for someone to second the motion. • Vote; if accepted, the report is adopted.	5 minutes
Correspondence • Highlight to the members any correspondence that may be of interest to them. The Secretary should have prepared a list of these items for information and should flag only those requiring a decision from the membership.	3 to 5 minutes
Reports of Officers • If LEC members have been assigned any tasks, they would report the results to the membership. Remember to keep any reports short (no more than 2 minutes) to keep the meeting flowing.	5 minutes
Reports of Committees • Reports from committees should be prepared in advance of the meeting by committee chairs. • Local committees could include health and safety, labour management, bargaining, human rights or equity committee, social committee, etc. • Full reports could be posted on the Local's website. Ask each committee chair to highlight one or two items they want the membership to know about. Again, keep it moving and keep it interesting. (See tips above in terms of how these could appear more interesting on the agenda.) • Copies of the reports should be given to the Secretary to include in the meeting minutes.	5 to 10 minutes

Call for nominations or elections • If there are any vacancies or you need to elect new Stewards in certain areas or locations in the Local, this is the time to open the floor for nominations for those positions. • Make sure that anyone running is a signed-up member in good standing. If you need assistance to run elections, contact an Executive Board Member or your Staff Rep. with enough notice prior to the meeting	
New business - Education highlight of the meeting • Introduce this part of the meeting with a few words about why this issue has been chosen, and what we're trying to do about it at this meeting (e.g., share information, make a decision, get people talking and acting in the workplace, etc.). • Introduce the process (film, speaker, discussion, presenting the results of a workplace survey and discussion, etc.). • Let the process unfold, and wrap it up on time.	30 to 60 minutes
Adjournment • Call for a motion to adjourn. • If accepted, the meeting is adjourned. • Make sure to note the time of adjournment on the meeting minutes.	
Build social solidarity in the Local • Invite everyone for food and get to know each other. • Include children if childcare is on-site. • Play music if you have some.	

A Quick Guide for the Treasurer's Report At Local Meetings

The Treasurer's report on finances is a standing item on the agenda of each membership meeting. This allows the members to know the state of the Local treasury and to take necessary corrective steps should the need arise.

Make sure to keep your Locals' books up to date. List all receipts and cheques, and calculate the remaining balance prior to each membership meeting. Prepare a written Treasurer's report to be distributed at the membership meeting. At a minimum, the report should contain the following information:

Book balance at the end of the previous period (month)	\$ _____
Total receipts for the period	\$ _____
Total expenses for the period	\$ _____
Book balance at the end of the period being reported	\$ _____
Bank balance at the end of the period being reported	\$ _____

Note to the Treasurer: Be sure to have with you all details of receipts and cheques issued in the event a member questions the amounts.

After you have read the report and it is adopted, a copy is placed in the official minute book and attached to the original minutes.

If, for any reason, a Treasurer's report is not acceptable, the meeting may direct the Treasurer to make minor changes on the spot. The report is then adopted as amended. In the case of substantial disagreement, direction may be given for the report to be reviewed and resubmitted by either the Treasurer or by a standing committee on finances, if one exists, or by a special committee appointed for that purpose.



Local Meetings Motion Form

Motion submitted by _____

Motion seconded by _____

I move that:

Reasons for the motion: Unlike a resolution, the rationale is not formally part of the motion but may form part of the speaking notes of the mover of the motion, once the motion is on the floor. It may also be part of the written record of the meeting.

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____
dd/mm/yyyy

Please submit the completed Local Meetings Motion Form to the Local Secretary at the meeting to ensure that the motion is recorded accurately.

Reference Guide for Local Elections

Reference Guide for Local Elections

The OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution

Article 7

Membership Rights

7.1 Every Member in good standing is entitled:

- a) To be represented by the Union;
- b) To be treated with dignity and respect within the Union;
- c) To be free from discrimination, interference, restriction, coercion, harassment, intimidation or disciplinary action exercised or practised by a Member with respect to another Member, both within the Union and in the workplace, by reason of race, colour, age, national or ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, family status, marital status, record of offences, physical characteristics or physical or mental disability;
- d) Subject to any qualifications stipulated elsewhere in this Constitution, to be nominated for, and hold, one or more offices in the Union;

Article 29

Term of Office

29.3.1 The term of office for Shop Stewards, Unit Stewards, and all Officers of LEC's elected after Convention 2024 shall be not more than three years or less than one year and shall be deemed to be three years unless a Local adopts a bylaw to the contrary. For the sake of continuity, terms of office may be overlapping, if so provided in Local Bylaws.

29.3.3 Any Member of the LEC may stand for re-election. An Officer must first have been elected or re-elected as a Shop Steward.

Article 29

Elections

29.4.1 Elections shall be conducted at general meetings of the Members concerned. Reasonable notice of the meeting and of the elections to take place must be given. In special circumstances the Local may request that voting be conducted by setting up one or more polling stations or be conducted by secure electronic means rather than at a general meeting and the President of the Union shall have the authority to grant such a request and establish rules to govern such votes.

29.4.2 Mid-term vacancies occurring among Stewards or Members of LEC's shall be filled promptly, by election in accordance with Article 29.4.1, except where the vacancy occurs within three months of the expiry of the term of office. In every case of filling a vacancy, the new incumbent shall serve only the unexpired portion of the term of office in question.

29.4.3 All elections within the Union shall be conducted by secret ballot.

Article 29

Membership Meetings

29.7.1 General membership meetings of all members of a Local shall be convened at least twice each year.

29.7.2 The Order of Business at a General Membership Meeting shall be:

1. Call to order.
2. Territory and/or Land Acknowledgement
3. Statement of Respect
4. Adoption of agenda.
5. Minutes of previous meeting.
6. Business arising.
7. Treasurer's report.
8. Correspondence.
9. Initiation of new members.
10. Reports of Officers.
11. Reports of Committees.
12. Nominations and/or elections.
13. Unfinished business.
14. New business.
15. Adjournment.

In presenting an agenda based on the above Order of Business, the LEC should specify subjects under items 9, 10, 12, and 13. A Local may change the above Order of Business by bylaw or for any given meeting by giving reasonable advance notice.

Article 29

Quorums

29.8.1 This article defines the quorum for meetings of Units, Unit Committees, Local Executive Committees and the general membership of a Local.

29.8.2 The quorum for meetings of the above groups shall be:

Size of Group	Quorum
1-20 members	50 percent of the members
21-200 members	10 members
201 or more members	5 percent of the members

Article 29

Oaths

29.9.1 All Officers elected at the Local or Unit level shall take the Oath of Office prescribed in Article 14.7 before being allowed to take office. The oath shall be administered at a General Membership Meeting or at a meeting of the LEC.

29.9.2 All Shop and Unit Stewards shall take the following oath before being allowed to take office. The oath shall be administered at a general membership meeting or at a meeting of the LEC, or by submitting a signed copy, to be read aloud at a general membership meeting:

“I, _____, promise that I will uphold and obey the Constitution and policies of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union/Syndicat des employés de la fonction publique de l’Ontario and the Bylaws of my Local, work with the Officers of the Local to represent the members, and fulfil the obligations and responsibilities of my elected position as Steward to the best of my ability.

I further promise to uphold the Union’s commitment to dismantling anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism and all forms of racism and discrimination, and I will actively participate in all required OPSEU/SEFPO training and/or initiatives.”

29.9.3 Every new Member shall, as part of their application for membership in the Union, be required to sign a declaration containing the following words:

“I, _____, solemnly promise to uphold and obey the Constitution and Bylaws of this Union, to assist my fellow members to improve their economic, political, and social conditions, to uphold the principles of democracy and fair play, and to do no deliberate wrong or harm to any other member of this Union.

I further promise to uphold the Union’s commitment to dismantling anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism and all forms of racism and discrimination.”

Every such declaration must be witnessed by a person who may be a member of the Local, an employee of the Union, or any other representative of the Union duly authorized by it.

29.9.4 It shall be the duty of all Officers and Members to uphold their respective oaths and failure to act in accordance with them shall be deemed to be contrary to the Constitution.

The OPSEU/SEFPO Procedures Manual

Procedures Manual – Section 8

Minutes of Local Meetings

Each Local is requested to submit minutes of its general meetings to its respective regional office.
(February 23-24, 1979 B, p.22)

Procedures Manual – Section 2

Attendance

Attendance at meetings is verified by reference to the register taken at meetings; therefore, it is important to register.
(August 21-22, 1980 B, p.13)

Procedures Manual – Section 6

Staff Role

All membership meetings shall be chaired by an elected OPSEU/SEFPO official who shall be responsible for the function, and any assigned staff will take instructions from the chair; and the Chair may be entrusted to staff for specific meeting segments such as elections.
(August 19, 1974 B, p.8; February 3-5, 1989 C)

Executive Board Motion (March 7, 8, 2012)

Re: Article 29.4.1 of the Constitution

14 calendar days is established as reasonable meeting notice (some exceptions may apply such as ratification/strike votes or other time sensitive issues)

Executive Board Motion (January 30, 2013)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Executive Board adopt a policy that encourages private member voting at all union meetings.

OPSEU/SEFPO Accessibility and Inclusion Policy - 2026

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, OPSEU/SEFPO 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/SEFPO members to benefit equally from and take part in union-related activities and functions.

2.0 General Principles and Application

OPSEU/SEFPO 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/SEFPO's requirements, policies or practices interfere with those members' ability to participate fully in Union-related activities and functions.

OPSEU/SEFPO's decisions regarding accommodation will be guided by the following general principles:

- The essence of accommodation is that each case is considered and assessed on an individual basis;
- Appropriate accommodation best promotes integration and full participation of all members;
- The dignity of the member is a primary consideration in deciding appropriate accommodation; and
- Accommodation requests and measures will be confidential to the extent possible.

Examples of appropriate accommodations include creating materials in alternative 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.

3.0 Accommodation Fund

- A central Accommodation Fund was created in 2002. This fund will continue to be a separate line item in OPSEU/SEFPO'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.
- Accommodation expenses for an event will be paid only for members whose other expenses for that event are being paid by OPSEU/SEFPO.

4.0 Education

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

1. Provide educational material on accommodation to Local Presidents;
2. Post the Accessibility Policy and educational material on the OPSEU/SEFPO website.

Local Elections Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan and run your Local elections. You can put a check mark in the “Done” column beside each item when you have completed it.

Steps in the Local Elections Process	Done
Before the Meeting – In advance of the day Review the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution and any Local bylaws for meeting requirements. Select a meeting time and location that are physically accessible as determined by an on-site inspection. Ensure that the location has the necessary furniture and equipment. Depending on the size of the meeting space and the group, you may need to arrange sound equipment (microphones, stands, etc.). Notice of General Membership Meeting posted/circulated to the membership at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting. The notice must highlight that elections will be held at the meeting and what positions will be elected. The notice must also include a reminder about OPSEU/SEFPO’s fragrance-free policy. Contact the Staff Rep. and the Executive Board Members to invite them to attend the meeting. Invite any guests or speakers. Gather documents that you will need at the meeting, including; • A copy(s) of the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution. You can download the Constitution on the OPSEU/SEFPO website, and it is also available in French. • A copy of Local bylaws (if applicable) • A copy of Robert's Rules of Order (optional) • Minutes of the last General Membership Meeting • A copy of “Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers” • Prepare a meeting register for members to sign in • Ensure a supply of OPSEU/SEFPO membership cards is available Obtain the most current membership list (available from the OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Office) • A copy of the Local Executive Contact Form • Vote tally sheets (available from the OPSEU/SEFPO regional office) Arrange to have 1 or 2 lockable ballot boxes and a good supply of blank ballots (these are available from your regional office).	

Make any arrangements for food and refreshments. You need to keep dietary issues in mind when selecting foods. Remember, no Coca-Cola products, nuts, or bottled water at the meeting, per OPSEU/SEFPO policy.

Just before the meeting – preparing the location

- Set up the room ahead of members arriving at the meeting.
- Prepare any flipcharts or audiovisual equipment that you need for the meeting.
- Try to make the room welcoming – if possible, lay out the chairs and tables so that people can see each other rather than the typical classroom/lecture style format.
- Put a meeting register out for signing at the entrance of the meeting location.
- Make copies of the previous meeting minutes, Treasurer's report, roles and responsibilities of Local union officers available for members to review. Have at least one copy of materials available in large print.
- Prepare a reasonably private polling station/voting booth for members to use, if they so choose. Locals are encouraged to provide private polling stations at meetings.

At the meeting - general

- Greet/welcome members as they are coming in. Introduce yourself and make sure that they have copies of any materials that are needed for the meeting.
- It is important to start and end the meeting on time.
- Ensure that there are minutes being taken of the meeting.
- Ensure members have signed the meeting register and that you have quorum.

Review the order of business – OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution 29.7.2

- Call the meeting to order.
- Welcome members and any staff, Executive Board Members, guests or speakers present.
- Deliver a Land Acknowledgement and read the OPSEU/SEFPO Statement of Respect, or have a couple of different people deliver each.
- Adopt the agenda.
- Once the agenda has passed, work your way through the order of business as outlined or amended.

At the meeting – the election process

Now that you have worked your way through the agenda, you're at the point of "nominations and or elections". Before opening the floor for nominations for Local union officer positions, it is advisable to review the roles and responsibilities of Local union officers. You may get some questions about these from members considering running for a particular position.

Note: You are encouraged to seek the assistance of your Staff Rep. or Executive Board Member in running your Local elections.

Also note: Some Locals will hold a Steward election at a meeting prior to electing for the positions of Local President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chief Steward. Some Locals, such as composites or multi-unit Locals, will elect their Stewards in unit meetings prior to the General Membership Meeting. Be sure to check any Local bylaws.

Term of Office – OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution

29.3.1 The term of office for Shop Stewards, Unit Stewards, and all Officers of LEC's shall be not more than three years or less than one year and shall be deemed to be three years unless a Local adopts a bylaw to the contrary.

Start with Steward elections

Review the Constitution articles 29 and any Local bylaws

- Members who wish to be elected for the position of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and chief Steward must be elected as Stewards first.
- Members wishing to run for a position need to be members in good standing. This means that the member has signed a union card and meets the requirements under OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 6.
- As chair, begin by opening the floor for nominations for the position of Steward for Local ____.
- Members will nominate candidates for the position of Steward. The nomination does not require a seconder.
- It is important to take minutes and keep a record of who has been nominated and who the nominator is.
- It is a best practice that when the nominations are being called out, you record in large print the names of the members who are nominated. You can use a flipchart, whiteboard or AV equipment to record the names. This will create a list of candidates for the members at the meeting to see.

- Keep calling for the nomination of Stewards for Local ____ until there are no more nominations.
- You should make 3 final calls for nominations. Once the third and final call is made, if there are no nominations, say “Nominations are closed.”
- You will then call out the name of the members who have been nominated in reverse order (last nominated – first called, and so on, back up the list).
- You need to ask each of the candidates to “stand” or “decline” the nomination.
- The members who decline will have their name stricken from the list, and they are no longer in the running.
- If there are more Stewards nominated than are required, then a run-off secret ballot will need to be done. Those candidates winning a clear majority are then elected. See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution article 29.1.5
- All candidates should be given an equal opportunity to address the members and answer questions.
- The Steward elections are now completed.
- New Stewards can be recruited and elected at any General Membership Meeting. You don’t have to wait for the next general election meeting.
- The Local executive committee should be aware of any gaps in Steward coverage that may exist and try to recruit for new Stewards. A Local mapping exercise may help with this issue.

Election of Local Executive Positions

The typical order of elections

- | | |
|--------|--|
| First | Local President |
| Second | Vice-President |
| Third | Secretary |
| Fourth | Treasurer |
| Fifth | Chief Steward (single unit Locals) |
| Six | Trustees (you need at least two and they cannot be Stewards) |

- Members wishing to be elected for the Local executive position must be elected as a Steward first.
- As chair, open the floor for nominations for the position of Local ____.
- Members will nominate Stewards for the position of _____ for the Local. The nomination does not require a seconder.

- Remember, it is important to take minutes and keep a record of who has been nominated and who the nominator is.
- When the nominations are being called out, record the names of the members who are nominated in large print. You can use a flipchart, whiteboard or AV equipment to do this. This will create a list of candidates for the members to see.
- Keep calling for the nomination for the position of Local _____ until there are no more nominations.
- You should make 3 final calls for nominations. Once the third and final call is made, if there are no nominations, say, "Nominations are closed."
- You will then call out the name of the members who have been nominated in reverse order (last nominated – first called).
- You need to ask the candidate to "stand" or "decline" the nomination.
- The names of the candidates who decline the nomination should be struck off the list.
- If there is more than one Steward nominated for the position, then a run-off secret ballot will need to be done. The candidate winning a clear majority is then elected.
- All candidates should be given an equal opportunity to address the members and answer questions.
- If only one candidate stands for the position after the nominations have been closed, that candidate is acclaimed to the position. It is a practice that if this happens, the person who nominated the candidate will cast one ballot.
- Repeat this process for each position on the Local executive.

7) Elections – more than one candidate running for a Local executive position

You will need:

- To make sure that the candidate's names are posted. It is important that the members know who is running for the position.
- A lockable ballot box with a good supply of blank ballots (these can be obtained from your regional office).
- A prepared reasonably private polling station, with pens.
- A separate room or a private/quiet area for counting the ballots.

As the chair of the meeting, you need to:

- Ask the candidates if they would like to make a speech.
- If there are speeches, then you will need to have a motion passed on how much time the candidates are allowed to speak.

- You will need to determine the order of speakers – you can do this by coin toss or pick a number out of a hat.
- You will need a stopwatch and a neutral person to keep time on the length of speeches from the candidates.
- Candidates make their speeches.
- The chair will ask the candidates if they wish to have a scrutineer (someone to oversee the vote count on their behalf). If the candidate(s) decline, then the chair will count the ballots and report back the results.

A Note About Scrutineers:

- Only one scrutineer per candidate is allowed.
- A scrutineer can be any union member present.
- A candidate cannot be a scrutineer.
- Staff may not serve as scrutineers.
- The chair should point out that scrutineers have the right to see each ballot as it is counted, but not to handle it.
- They also have the right to have objections to any ballot.

Scrutineers have the right to keep a record of the count, but should be cautioned not to reveal their knowledge or show the count until the result of the particular vote has been announced by the Chair.

- If none of the candidates have a clear majority, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is dropped off the ballot, and another round of ballots is handed out for voting.
- To win, a candidate must have a clear majority, which means more than 50% of the valid ballots cast.

The Balloting Process

Important Note:

- In all of our votes, it is critical to maintain the utmost integrity in the process.
- The method of voting needs to be open with clear instructions so that members know who or what they are voting for. Members need to feel comfortable with the process and be allowed to vote in private if they wish.
- Once the candidates' speeches have ended, the voting will begin.

- The doors to the meeting need to be tiled (closed) for the duration of the vote. Assign someone to ensure the doors remain tiled.
- Make sure everyone knows the candidates' names.
- As chair, proceed to pass out one blank ballot per member, including the candidates. Non-members of the Local (those who have not signed a union card) and guests do not get to vote.
- Ask members to mark down one name and one name only on the ballot. An exception to this would be when electing Trustees, as you are electing more than one candidate for the position.

Spoiled ballots

- A ballot is invalid if it has more names marked on it than there are positions to be filled.
- The ballot has the name(s) of persons not properly nominated.
- The ballot has no names written on it.
- The ballot has any distinguishing or distinctive mark which, in the opinion of the Chair, is or could be intended to identify the voter.
- You need to call out, "Has everyone received a ballot?" to ensure that everyone has had an opportunity to vote.
- Allow the members a few minutes to mark their preferred candidate's name on the ballot. You also need to allow members to use a private polling station if they wish. You will need to tell members that they have this option.
- After a few minutes, it will be time to collect the ballots.
- Open the ballot box and openly display to the members that it is empty.
- Lock the ballot box. Hold on to the key.
- Begin picking up the ballots. Each member puts their own ballot in the box. Members should not collect ballots from other members.
- Once all ballots are collected, you will need to call out, "Does anyone still have a ballot"? This is to ensure that all ballots are collected.
- Ask the scrutineers (if there are any) to join you at the separate count room in a quiet/private location.
- The doors to the meeting room can now be un-tiled (unlocked).
- Count the ballots. Remember that only you should be touching the ballots. If there are scrutineers, you will need to ensure they can see you conducting the count. The winner will require a clear majority.
- Call the members back to order.
- Announce the winner.
- Repeat this process for each of the Local executive positions.

Election of Local Trustees

The election process for trustees is the same as noted above. Remember that they cannot hold any other office in the Local in order to be elected as a Local trustee.

Every Local shall elect an audit committee composed of at least two members to be known as Trustees. See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution article 29.6.1.

Finalizing the Election Process

As the Chair, you can ask for a motion to destroy the ballots. You can do this after each position is elected or at the end of the entire voting process.

It is also a good practice to ask, “Are there any objections to the vote process”?

If there are none, then the elections for the Local are completed.

Make sure that the minutes of the meeting are accurate and are completed in a timely fashion.

Send a copy of the signed meeting minutes to the regional office so that the necessary changes to the Local executive listing can be made both at the OPSEU/SEFPO Regional and Head Office.

Complaints arising from the Elections

If there are complaints about the voting process or irregularities that deviate from the description in the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution or OPSEU/SEFPO policy, the member(s) challenging the process need to contact their Staff Rep. as soon as possible after the elections and provide an outline of their concerns.

The Staff Rep. will contact their supervisor with the details of the complaint. The supervisor will commence an inquiry into the complaint and determine further actions if necessary.

If there is a concern with staff, please refer to OPSEU/SEFPO Procedures Manual 2.14.9.

Sample Voting Booths

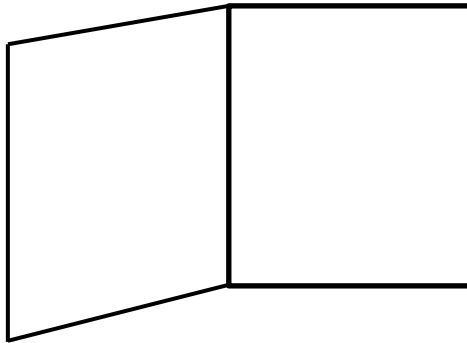
Two-sided booth

Take one piece of cardboard and fold it in half or

Take two pieces of cardboard and tape them together

Each cardboard section should be at least 8.5" wide by 11" high

See diagram



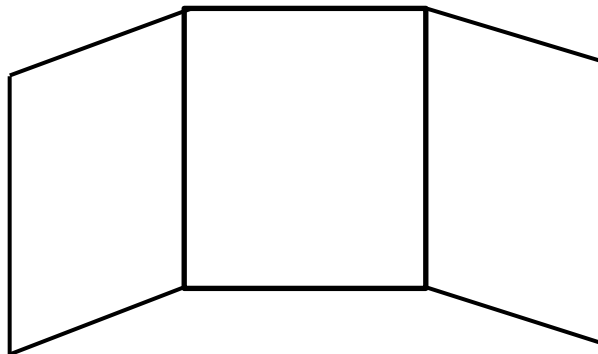
Three-sided booth

Take one piece of cardboard and fold it into three sections or

Take three pieces of cardboard and tape them together

Each cardboard section should be at least 8.5" wide by 11" high

See diagram

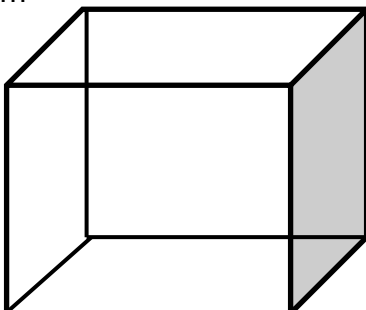


Closed-style booth

You can use a cardboard box. The box should be at least 12" square

Leave one end open by removing the flaps or folding the flaps in

See diagram



Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do you become a signed-up member of OPSEU/SEFPO, and not just a bargaining unit employee covered by the Collective Agreement?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 6.1

You become a union member and not just a bargaining unit employee by signing and submitting an OPSEU/SEFPO Membership Application.

Q: How does a member of the union remain a “member in good standing”?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 6.3

A member shall remain in good standing provided they are:

- a) not more than 3 months in arrears in payment of dues
- b) gainfully employed in a bargaining unit for which the union holds or seeks recognized bargaining rights
- c) not penalized by suspension or expulsion following conviction under Article 30 (strike breaking) of the Constitution
- d) not penalized by suspension or expulsion following conviction of a breach of OPSEU/SEFPO’s harassment and discrimination policy, provided that, in accordance with any applicable laws, no such penalty shall require the employer to discharge such member from employment
- e) not penalized by suspension under Article 16.10 of the Constitution
- f) Not penalized by failure to step down from an acting management or acting excluded management position under Article 6.8.2.

Q: All bargaining unit employees are covered under the Collective Agreement and have the right to file a grievance. They also have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and be free from discrimination in the workplace. What additional rights come with signed-up union membership?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 7.1

- a) To be represented by the Union;
- b) To be treated with dignity and respect within the Union;
- c) To be free from discrimination, interference, restriction, coercion, harassment, intimidation or disciplinary action exercised or practised by a Member with respect to another Member, both within the Union and in the workplace, by reason of race, colour, age, national or ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, family status, marital status, record of offences, physical characteristics or physical or mental disability;
- d) Subject to any qualifications stipulated elsewhere in this Constitution, to be nominated for, and hold, one or more offices in the Union;
- e) To participate in the Union’s business at the Local level, participate in the election of delegates and alternate delegates to Conventions, and vote on the

- ratification of collective agreements affecting such Member, except where the collective agreement is the result of binding arbitration;
- f) To make a formal presentation to the Board upon receipt of such presentation in writing at Headquarters not less than ten (10) calendar days before the date of the regularly scheduled Board Meeting at which the presentation is to be made, provided always that notice may be waived by majority vote of the Board;
 - g) To attend any meeting of the Board, notwithstanding that they may not have a vote at such meeting, except that the Board may meet in closed session for purposes of discussing individual or staff contracts of employment;
 - h) To receive a copy of the Constitution of the Union and to be advised of amendments to it, and to receive an up-to-date copy whenever the Constitution is compiled and reprinted.

Q: What does a union Steward do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution - Article 8.1

Each Union Steward shall be responsible for the representation of members in a working area, including the responsibility:

- a) to distribute information to the group
- b) to carry the group's issues to the LEC/unit committee
- c) to communicate LEC/unit committee decisions to the group
- d) to enlist the support of members of the group in workplace actions and union campaigns
- e) to prepare and investigate grievances from the group

Also, look at the Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit.

Q: What does a Local President do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.5.1

The President shall enforce compliance with bylaws and regulations of the union and Local; preside at Local meetings; be an ex officio member of all Local committees; generally supervise the affairs and operations of the Local; carry out such other duties as may be prescribed by Local bylaw.

Also, look at the Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit.

Q: What does the Local Vice-President do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.5.2

The Vice-President shall perform all the presidential functions during any absence of the President and accept and exercise such other duties and powers as may be designated by the Local Executive Committee or the President. The Vice-President

may also attend all union functions (including regional meetings and conventions) in place of the President when the President cannot attend.

Also, look at the Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit.

Q: What does the Local Secretary do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.5.3

The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Local and keep minutes; distribute notices to all members of the Local, as required; answer and/or forward all pertinent correspondence; and forward all pertinent membership information to the appropriate union regional office.

Also, look at the Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit.

Q: What does the Local Treasurer do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.5.4

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Local's assets, including its operating funds.

Also, look at the Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit.

Q: What qualifies you to be elected as an officer of your Local?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 7.1

A member in good standing is entitled, subject to any qualifications stipulated elsewhere in this Constitution, to be nominated for, and hold one or more offices in the union.

Article 29.1.2 The government of Locals shall be based on the shop Steward system, and the election of officers of Local executive committees shall be from among the shop Stewards.

Q: What is the term of office for shop Stewards and other Local officers?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.3.1

The term of office for shop Stewards, unit Stewards, and all officers of LEC's shall be not more than three years or less than one year and shall be deemed to be three years, unless a Local adopts a bylaw to the contrary. For the sake of continuity, terms of office may overlap if so provided in Local bylaws.

Q: How many trustees must the Local have, and what do they do?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.6.1

Every Local shall elect an audit committee composed of **at least two** members to be known as trustees. The trustees shall be elected at a General Membership Meeting from among the members and may not hold any other office in any Local. The terms may be varied to provide for overlapping terms.

Article 29.6.2 The trustees shall examine all books, records, and properties of their Local, including any unit thereof, at least twice each year.

Q: How many General Membership Meetings is a Local required to have each year?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.7.1

General meetings of all members of a Local shall be convened **at least twice each year**.

Q: How many Local Executive Committee (LEC) Meetings is a Local required to have each year?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.2.2

The Local executive committee shall administer the affairs of the Local in accordance with this Constitution, the bylaw of the Local and the wishes of the members of the Local. The committee shall meet **at least once every three months**. The Local President may call a committee meeting at any time to deal with business of an urgent nature.

Q: How many members have to attend a meeting for it to be official?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.8.1

This article defines quorum for meetings of units, unit committees, Local executive committees and the general membership of a Local.

Article 29.8.2 The quorum for meetings of the above groups shall be:

Size of Group	Quorum
1-20 members	50 percent of the members
21-200 members	10 members
201 or more	5 percent of the members

Q: Is the Local executive committee (LEC) required to present an annual budget to the membership of the Local?

Answer - See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 29.10.5

The LEC shall present a budget to the annual General Membership Meeting of the Local. The budget in multi-unit and composite Locals shall include budget lines for each unit, based on the number of dues-paying members in the unit and the projected unit activity for the year.

Q: What are the rules that govern your Local if you don't have Local bylaws?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 12.5.1

A Local may adopt Local bylaws. If a Local fails to adopt its own set of Local bylaws, then Article 29 of this Constitution shall have full force and effect as if it had been adopted by the Local's membership as its own set of bylaws.

Q: How does the Local select delegates for OPSEU/SEFPO annual convention?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 13.5.1

All delegates and alternate delegates from Locals shall be elected at each Convention at a general membership meeting by a clear majority, with run-off ballots if necessary. In accordance with Local bylaws, or a two-thirds majority vote at the Local election meeting, Locals may elect their delegates and alternate delegates by plurality, and Locals may adopt a procedure to facilitate the election of delegates from various Units within the Local. Separate votes shall be required for delegates and alternate delegates. The Local President shall automatically be the first delegate. Where a Local is entitled to more than one alternate delegate, those elected by plurality shall be ranked according to the number of votes received.

Q: How many delegates and alternates can the Local send to OPSEU/SEFPO convention or regional meeting?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 13.4 and 13.52

13.4 Delegate entitlement to Conventions shall be as follows:

(a) Locals:

- Up to 150 Members 1 delegate
- 151 to 300 Members 2 delegates
- 301 to 500 Members 3 delegates
- 501 to 800 Members 4 delegates
- 801 to 1100 Members 5 delegates
- 1101 to 1500 Members 6 delegates
- 1501 to 1900 Members 7 delegates
- 1901 to 2300 Members 8 delegates
- 2301 or more Members 9 delegates

13.5.2 Only alternate delegates up to the number of delegates to which a Local is entitled may attend Convention. All Convention expenses of alternate delegates shall be borne by the Local.

Q: Do members pay dues to the union as soon as they are certified by the labour board?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 20.4.1

In the case of newly-certified bargaining units, union dues shall not be payable by any member to the union until they are covered by a Collective Agreement negotiated by the union on behalf of the unit, but dues may then be payable retroactively to the effective date of the Collective Agreement, at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Q: Who decides the level of union dues?

Answer – See OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution Article 20.1

The level of regular Union dues shall be as prescribed by the Board, but no increase in the level may take effect until approved by at least two-thirds of the delegates at a Convention following the sending of notice of the proposed increase, accompanied by a proposed budget, to all Locals at least three months prior to the start of the Convention. On receipt of such notice, each LEC shall convene a meeting of the general membership to give direction to its delegates.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers

Steward	
Candidates for Steward must be a signed-up OPSEU/SEFPO member in good standing A Steward is responsible for and to a small group of specifically identified members. Core responsibilities for these include: Listen for and identify members' diverse issues, and carry them to the LEC/unit committee for a decision Communicate union information to members, including LEC decisions that affect them Bring together diverse members to build solidarity and seek support for workplace actions authorized by LEC/unit Attend LEC/unit committee meetings to participate in decision-making Conduct basic preparation and investigation into grievances from members Represent members in step 1 and other meetings with management Stewards may expand their core responsibilities to include other areas, such as health and safety, bargaining, labour management committees, union counselling, and building links outside the Local	Candidates for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chief Steward must be an elected Steward Please note: Training is available for all positions within OPSEU/SEFPO, and regional office staff are readily available to assist.

Local President	Vice-President
Oversee the healthy functioning of the LEC and the Local Keep the union visible and credible with employer(s) and in the workplace(s) Represent the Local to the rest of OPSEU/SEFPO, the labour movement and the community Share leadership role with other LEC members Encourage and mentor new and diverse leadership in all parts of the Local Work with the Treasurer to maintain the financial health of the Local Maintain and encourage communication between Stewards, units, the regional office and Executive Board Members	Provide support to the Local President and other LEC members Actively share the workload of the LEC in carrying out Local action plans and programs Act on behalf of the Local President if absent
Secretary	Treasurer
Oversee the healthy day-to-day operations of the LEC and the Local Document decisions made by the LEC and the membership (minutes) Send out information to the LEC and the membership (e.g., notices, memos and bulletins) Maintain current information helpful to the LEC's programs (e.g., membership info, participation in education, union and community resources)	Responsible for all financial transactions of the Local Issue cheques and have signing authority Keep financial records of the Local Ensure that trustees have the financial information in order to complete trustee audit reports Develop and present an annual budget to LEC and membership reflecting the Local's program priorities for the year

Chief Steward	Trustees
Oversee, support and mentor other Stewards to do their jobs well Provide information, references and training to Stewards, the LEC and members on representation issues Identify, with Stewards, common workplace issues to address with the employer or for bargaining Keep records of grievances for use by the membership in dealing with the employer Represent members through the higher levels of the grievance process	* Trustees cannot hold any other office in the Local Ensure the integrity of the Local's bookkeeping by reviewing the Local's financial records at least twice a year Report briefly, twice a year, to the membership that the trustee audit reports (TAR) for the Local are complete * Constitution, Article 29.6.1

OPSEU/SEFPO Local and Provincial Structure

Local Health and Safety Committees – OPSEU/SEFPO Policy

Purpose

Local Health and Safety Committees support OPSEU/SEFPO members by promoting healthy and safe workplaces, assisting members with workplace health and safety concerns, and supporting the Local Executive Committee (LEC) in carrying out the Union's health and safety responsibilities.

Responsibilities

Local Health and Safety Committees may:

- Investigate member health and safety concerns and assist in obtaining appropriate remedies;
- Conduct workplace inspections where permitted by legislation, collective agreements, or workplace practices;
- Participate in Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) as union representatives;
- Promote health and safety awareness and education among members;
- Inform members of their rights and responsibilities under occupational health and safety legislation and collective agreements;
- Represent members during workplace inspections, work refusals, investigations, and health and safety proceedings, where appropriate;
- Report regularly to the Local Executive Committee and the membership.

Composition

The Local Executive Committee is responsible for appointing or establishing Local Health and Safety Committee representatives in accordance with OPSEU/SEFPO policies, Local bylaws, and workplace requirements.

Training

Health and Safety representatives are encouraged to participate in OPSEU/SEFPO health and safety education programs and other relevant training opportunities to support their role.

Accountability

Local Health and Safety Committees and representatives are accountable to the Local Executive Committee and should provide regular reports to both the LEC and the membership.

Labour Management Committees

Consult your Collective Agreement for guidelines for your labour management committee (labour management committees can be called LMC's – Labour Management Committee; LERC – Local Employment Relations Committee; UCC – Union College Committee; or UMC – Union Management Committee), depending on where you work and how your collective agreement describes them.

The following is a list of issues a Local commonly discusses with management at the labour management committee. Your Collective Agreement may also specify which matters may (or may not) come before the committee.

1. Work week agreements (including starting and quitting times)
2. Dress
3. Food service and supply
4. Rest areas and lounges
5. Environment – air, heat, light, space, accommodation
6. Exercise rooms
7. Educational courses – payment
8. Union advertising and posting
9. Bulletin Boards
10. Time off for committees
11. Provision of information from management
12. Meetings with management
13. Lunch and coffee breaks
14. Rest periods (sick)
15. Shift scheduling
16. Overtime payments
17. Providing union information to new employees
18. New policies and procedures
19. Staffing
20. Other?

The union, despite the limitations in scope, encourages negotiations at the labour management committee to resolve problems at their source. The union still reserves the right to grieve and to negotiate service-wide items that are unresolved at the Local level.

OPSEU/SEFPO Equity Committees and Caucuses

Provincial Human Rights Committee



Provincial Women's Committee



Provincial Francophone Committee



Indigenous Circle



Provincial Young Workers Committee



Coalition of Racialized Workers



Jewish Caucus

**JEWISH
CAUCUS**
Continuity · Culture · Community

**CAUCUS
JUIF**
Continuité · Culture · Communauté



Disability Rights Caucus



OPSEU/SEFPO Disability Rights Caucus
Caucus des personnes handicapées de l'OPSEU/SEFPO

Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel



OPSEU
SEFPO

**RAINBOW
ALLIANCE
ARC-EN-CIEL**

Indigenous Circle (IC)

Composition and General Information

The Indigenous Circle first became a caucus in 2000. Twelve years later, the Circle put forward a motion for Committee status, which passed at Convention 2012.

The Indigenous Circle self-identifies as Indigenous OPSEU/SEFPO members. They assist in creating networks within OPSEU/SEFPO regions. They develop and promote programs to encourage First Nation status and non-status, Métis and Inuit members to participate in union activities. They assist and support the grievance process, advocate, educate and lobby for Indigenous issues in the workplace, among the membership and in the community.

Indigenous Circle meetings are conducted in accordance with Indigenous traditions. The purpose of meeting in different parts of the province is for the Circle to connect directly with the Local Indigenous community. They invite an Elder to offer a teaching at the start of each meeting. The overall purpose is to build partnerships with the Local Indigenous community.

The group sits in a circle throughout the meeting. Meetings start with smudging (a ceremony involving the burning of traditional medicines such as sage or tobacco to cleanse and prepare the body and mind) and teaching from an Elder.

The significance of the Indigenous Circle logo design

(Source: “The Reason the OPSEU/SEFPO Indigenous Circle Banner Looks as it Does”)

Shape: The logo is a circle, which is very significant in the Indigenous community. All sit together, no one shorter, no one taller, no one sitting in front, and no one sitting behind anyone else. The circle is a symbol of the equality of everyone in the community – no one is greater than or less than anyone else.

Colours: The inside of the circle is split into quarters: white, black, red and yellow. These colours represent the four directions (north, east, south, west), the four elements of life, the four seasons, four races of humanity, four stages of life (the good, the wondering, the responsibility and the wisdom), and the four quadrants that make us (mental, physical, emotional and spiritual). The green leafy border represents the vegetation that makes up the Earth Mother’s dress, and sweetgrass, one of the medicines burned during smudging.

Symbols: The three icons in the banner represent the three Indigenous cultures in Canada: Inuit, First Nation, and Métis. The Inukshuk in the black quadrant represents the Inuit, the feather in the yellow quadrant represents the First Nations, and the infinity symbol in the red quadrant represents the Métis.

Significant Milestones and Work of the Circle

Smudging at OPSEU/SEFPO events

The Indigenous Circle has introduced smudging at many OPSEU/SEFPO events (e.g., Convention and Equity conferences) to welcome both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants and to acknowledge and show respect for the fact that we meet on the lands of the first inhabitants of Turtle Island. Over the years, the Indigenous Circle has been instrumental in advocating for agreements with hotels and venues to accommodate smudging at events and conferences.

Smudging is a traditional purification ceremony familiar to many First Nations people. It involves the burning of one or more medicines gathered from the earth. The most commonly used are sweetgrass, sage and cedar. Smudging is also voluntary.

Indigenous Issues regional education course

In 2014, the Indigenous Circle identified an opportunity to educate the broader OPSEU/SEFPO membership on Indigenous issues and culture. The Circle felt that this course would bring about greater understanding of Indigenous issues and further encourage Indigenous members to get involved in the union. The Circle made a motion to the Executive Board requesting that a 1.5-day regional educational course be created. The course was developed and made available to the regions to run at their educational weekends in January 2015. As of this writing, OPSEU/SEFPO now has two (2) Indigenous-based courses available.

Support and awareness-raising of issues in the community

The Indigenous Circle supports Indigenous movements across the province and country, and raises awareness of them within OPSEU/SEFPO. These issues include:

Sisters-in-Spirit, a project of the Native Women's Association of Canada which advocates for awareness and action on "the alarmingly high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada".

The Idle No More movement to raise awareness of Indigenous land and sovereignty issues through social media, peaceful protest and education.

Attawapiskat – The Circle stood in solidarity with Chief Theresa Spence during her hunger strike in 2012 to protest the terrible conditions on the Attawapiskat First Nation reserve.

June 21 Campaign - Advocating for a statutory holiday for June 21, National Indigenous Peoples Day.

ReDress Campaign – designed to pressure the Canadian government to fully implement all of the recommendations contained in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) released on June 3, 2019. The report concluded that the treatment of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQI people was colonial genocide. The campaign makes available a Red Dress Pin available to any OPSEU/SEFPO member who requests one. The overall goal is to ensure that the MMIWG Inquiry results in justice and healing for the families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Girls and 2SLGBTQQI people.

OPSEU/SEFPO Affirmation of Indigenous Peoples' Rights - drafted in consultation with the union's Indigenous Mobilization Team (IMT) and First Nations chiefs, the affirmation is intended to guide the union towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Land Acknowledgements - as a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report, many settler organizations began a practice of starting their meetings with a Land Acknowledgment as an act of reconciliation. The initial purpose is to educate about the realities of Indigenous communities. However, the diversity and richness of Indigenous cultures and history cannot be captured in a pre-written statement read at the beginning of a meeting. Acknowledging the injustices inflicted on Indigenous communities without a real commitment to repair the harm done sounds like an empty apology that has become all too familiar to Indigenous people. It is recommended that the land acknowledgment be placed first on the Agenda, prior to the Statement of Respect and definitely before any rendition of O Canada, and not treated as a check box on a list of to-do items.

Land acknowledgment resources are available on the [OFL website](#)

Disability Rights Caucus (DRC)

Composition and General Information

The Disability Rights Caucus was formed in 2000. As a caucus, there is no set number of members per region, but the caucus does try to ensure representation from every region when possible. Vacancies on the Disability Rights Caucus are filled through a call-out, application, and selection process run by the Caucus, with assistance from the Equity Unit. The caucus meets several times per year in order to plan and carry out its activities. They also generally hold a meeting at Convention.

The Disability Rights Caucus is made up of OPSEU/SEFPO members who identify as people with disabilities. The mandate of the Caucus is to raise awareness and understanding of disability issues within OPSEU/SEFPO, in the workplace, and in the broader community. This includes apparent and non-apparent disabilities.

Significant Milestones and Work of the Disability Rights Caucus:

Accessible venues for OPSEU/SEFPO events

The Disability Rights Caucus has worked with OPSEU/SEFPO staff for years to raise and resolve issues of accessibility at OPSEU/SEFPO events such as Convention, regional educationals, meetings, and conferences. The Caucus has also provided feedback on the accessibility of OPSEU/SEFPO buildings and property. As a result of this advocacy and feedback, OPSEU/SEFPO now makes it a priority to ensure that venues where events are held meet strong accessibility standards and that its buildings are also accessible. This work is never done; it is a continuous process of advocacy and feedback between the Caucus and the Union.

Accessible communication formats

The Disability Rights Caucus has championed accessibility issues related to communication formats. They have advocated for accessibility features such as large-print documents made available at meetings, subtitles for videos, interpreters, accessible electronic documents that can be read by screen readers, and individual accommodations customized as needed. The Disability Rights Caucus was

Also asked for their input on the accessibility features of the new website when OPSEU/SEFPO overhauled and redesigned it using a whole new system in 2026. This is also work that is always in progress; OPSEU/SEFPO and the Disability Rights Caucus continue to explore ways to ensure everyone, regardless of ability, has access to the same information and communications.

Support and awareness-raising of issues in the community

The Disability Rights Caucus also stands in solidarity with movements and organizations in broader society and raises awareness among the OPSEU/SEFPO membership of the issues they champion. Some of these issues include:

Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups (ONIWG), “a group of workers who have been injured or made sick on the job”, advocating for reform of the Workers’ Compensation Act. The Disability Rights Caucus encourages support and attendance at activities organized by ONIWG across the province, including protests, conferences, and educational events.

Mad Pride/mental injury movements – the Disability Rights Caucus raises awareness about, and has organized and attended workshops on dealing with mental health and mental injury issues in the workplace and beyond. The Caucus encourages members to reach out to them to discuss their experiences with these issues.

Commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities: The Caucus highlights December 3rd each year to raise awareness among the OPSEU/SEFPO membership of disability rights issues and to call on governments to make accommodation, disability issues, and compensation for workplace injuries a priority. The DRC also annually commemorates the **National Day of Mourning** (April 28th) - paying respect to, and remembering the thousands of workers who have been killed, injured or suffered illness as a result of work-related incidents.

Provincial Francophone Committee (PFC)

Composition and General Information

The Provincial Francophone Committee began as an Advisory Committee in the early 90s and became the Francophone Caucus in 2001. The caucus was recognized as a Committee by Convention 2011 and became operational after the regional elections of 2013. The Provincial Francophone Committee is made up of seven members, one from each region of the province. They meet several times a year in order to plan and carry out their activities.

The original mandate of the Francophone Advisory Committee in the 1990s was to advise the union on services to offer to OPSEU/SEFPO’s francophone members working within the newly organized Cité collégiale, Collège Boréal, and Collège des Grands Lacs.

Since then, the Francophone Caucus, and now Committee, has added to its mandate, empowering its members through education by developing and promoting programs that encourage francophones to participate in union activities. The Committee aims to increase awareness and understanding of francophone issues throughout the

membership in all francophone communities across the province. It also promotes the use of Canada's two official languages while respecting their linguistic and cultural differences. The Committee raises "French consciousness" among francophone members.

Significant Milestones and Work of the Francophone Committee

2015 Francophone Conference

The Provincial Francophone Committee passed a resolution at Convention for the first OPSEU/SEFPO Francophone Conference to be held in 2015. The Committee will use this conference to reach out to francophone members of OPSEU/SEFPO and bring them together to discuss key issues.

Translation of Materials and Communications

The Provincial Francophone Committee has been a champion since its inception as an advisory committee, ensuring that there are French translations of printed and electronic materials and that French-language interpretation is available at events. The Francophone Committee has advocated translating as many educational materials as possible, and OPSEU/SEFPO is in the process of having all its educational materials translated so that courses can be offered in French as well as English. The Committee has advocated for hiring additional translators to achieve this goal, and its efforts succeeded when two translators were added to OPSEU/SEFPO staff. OPSEU/SEFPO has both an English and a French website, and every effort is made to translate and make available online content in both English and French.

Commemoration of International Francophonie Day and UN French Language Day

The Francophone Committee commemorates International Francophonie Day and UN French Language Day every March 20th. The Committee does this to encourage OPSEU/SEFPO members, Francophone and non-Francophone, to celebrate cultural and linguistic diversity and to break down communication barriers, ensuring that everyone can come together in solidarity as a team.

Francophone solidarity with Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel

After consultation with the Provincial Francophone Committee and as an act of solidarity with OPSEU/SEFPO's francophone members, the Rainbow Alliance agreed to change the official name of their group to Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel and to refer to it as such, whether communicating in English or French. (Arc-en-ciel means "Rainbow" in French.)

Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRC)

Composition and General Information

In 1986, OPSEU/SEFPO created the Race Relations and Minority Rights Committee, which is a precursor to the current Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRC). The original committee was formed to advise the President and Board on policies to enhance and encourage human rights. This committee's mandate was to encourage Locals to form their own human rights committees, which would provide confidential support to employees, offer education, and prepare contract language for bargaining to create joint programs to combat discrimination.

The original advisory committee got official constitutional committee status in 1992 and was renamed the Provincial Human Rights Committee. There are seven members of the committee, one member per region. The PHRC continues its mandate to establish Local human rights committees, develops and promotes programs that encourage all members to participate in union activities, and increases awareness and understanding of workplace, community, national and international human rights issues.

The PHRC focuses on the following strategic areas for education, collective bargaining, organizing and communications work:

- fighting anti-gay/anti-abortion movements
- decent pay for decent work, the importance of maintaining public services, and fighting for the working class
- combatting misconceptions about unions
- accommodation, accessibility and the importance of breaking down barriers
- environmental issues
- promoting employment equity and bringing greater awareness of the plight of migrant workers
- supporting Indigenous communities

Significant Milestones and Work of the Provincial Human Rights Committee

(Source: OPSEU/SEFPO History document)

Early equity initiatives at OPSEU/SEFPO

In 1986, Convention ordered OPSEU/SEFPO to ensure that members from equity-seeking groups were represented at union educational sessions and that members with disabilities were appropriately accommodated.

OPSEU/SEFPO Employment Equity policy

In 1991, OPSEU/SEFPO adopted an Employment Equity policy and became one of the first unions to hire a Human Rights Officer.

Biennial Human Rights Conference

The PHRC hosts a Human Rights Conference that brings together members across the province to learn about and become active on human rights issues of the day.

Internal advocacy

The PHRC regularly engages in the following work to identify and address needs within the membership on human rights:

- Develop resources that increase awareness of human rights issues
- Holding workshops, presentations, educationals, discussion forums, and information as requested by provincial, regional and Local members

- Supporting the work of the other Provincial Committees and caucuses
- Using social media, email, educationals and publications (e.g. In Solidarity) to communicate with the membership about human rights issues

Provincial Women's Committee (PWC)

Composition and General Information

The Provincial Women's Committee (PWC) began as the Region 5 Women's Caucus, a group of OPSEU/SEFPO women activists in Toronto. In 1980, Convention established the Provincial Women's Committee. The Committee has seven members, one from each region of the province.

The mandate of the Provincial Women's Committee is to be an advocate for women within the union, especially at the Local level. The Committee also initiates campaigns in the workplace and community for women's rights. They make themselves available to work with bargaining teams on contract language regarding equity issues.

Equality for women and other equity groups is a central thrust to all of their work, both in the workplace and in their communities. They encourage each union Local to set up an active women's committee with a mandate to highlight issues of particular concern to OPSEU/SEFPO members who are women.

Significant Milestones and Work of the Provincial Women's Committee (Formerly known as the Women's Caucus)

(Sources: OPSEU/SEFPO History document, PWC website)

Equal Opportunities Coordinator

In 1977, the Provincial Women's Committee convinced OPSEU/SEFPO to create an Equal Opportunities Coordinator, reporting directly to the President, and charged with promoting equity. OPSEU/SEFPO was the first Canadian union to create a position with a full-time mandate to ensure women's needs were taken into account in all union decisions.

Child care during union meetings

In 1977-78, Convention approved paying for child care at all union meetings so that women with children would be able to participate.

Sexual Harassment in the Union

In 1979, the Provincial Women's Committee convinced Convention to outlaw sexual harassment throughout the union.

Biennial Women's Conference

The first biennial Women's Conference was held in 1982. Each Women's Conference has a theme relevant to the current climate and issues of the day, and brings women from across the province to learn and strategize together through speakers and workshops.

Paid Parental Leave

As a result of OPSEU/SEFPO focusing on issues of importance to women, members of the Ontario Public Service (OPS) and College Faculty achieved paid parental leave in 1982.

Universal Child Care

The Provincial Women's Committee works with the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare to advocate for universally accessible, high-quality, not-for-profit, regulated child care in Ontario

Pay Equity

The Provincial Women's Committee has had an ongoing campaign for equal pay for many years, up to the present day. They have created flyers and posters and post regular updates online, encouraging OPSEU/SEFPO members and the general public to support the principles of pay equity.

International Women's Day

Every March, the Provincial Women's Committee hosts, attends, supports, and encourages OPSEU/SEFPO women to attend International Women's Day events across the province. International Women's Day is a global day that recognizes the social, cultural, economic, and political achievements of women.

Provincial Young Workers Committee (PYC)

Composition and General Information

In 2004, the Youth Caucus was formed. This caucus was granted committee status by Convention in 2007 and became the Provincial Young Workers Committee (PYC). The Committee is composed of seven members, one from each OPSEU/SEFPO region. The mandate of the Provincial Young Workers Committee is to promote young worker involvement in the union and to advocate and educate around young workers' issues. Their work focuses on:

- Increasing awareness on key young worker issues such as environmental sustainability, international fair trade, part-time issues and job security
- Building young workers' participation and activism inside and outside of the union
- Mobilizing and educating at the regional level
- Inclusion and succession-planning in the union

The committee is dedicated to bringing new ideas, energy and activism to OPSEU/SEFPO. Their goal is to promote, educate, motivate, mobilize and empower young workers whenever and wherever possible.

An OPSEU/SEFPO young worker is defined as a member in good standing who is 35 years old or less.

Significant Milestones and Work of the Provincial Young Workers Committee

Killer Coke resolution

At the 2009 Convention, the Provincial Young Workers Committee put forward a resolution supporting the international Campaign to Stop Killer Coke. This campaign highlighted the violence and killing of trade unionists who work for Coca-Cola bottlers in those countries. The PYC resolution was to boycott all Coca-Cola products at all OPSEU/SEFPO events, locally, regionally, and provincially. The resolution passed, and the No-Coke policy stands to this day.

Annual Young Workers Conference

Each year, the Provincial Youth Committee holds a Young Workers Conference to coincide with the United Nations' International Youth Day (IYD), observed annually on August 12.

The conference brings OPSEU/SEFPO young workers together from across the province to learn and strategize on how to address issues of the day. These conferences generally feature a mix of speakers, discussions, workshops, and opportunities for young workers to plan activist work together.

The conference theme often incorporates the global IYD theme designated by the UN at the start of each year.

The conference has grown from its humble beginnings at the Membership Centre in downtown Toronto, where it initially welcomed participants. Today, it welcomes over 150 OPSEU/SEFPO young workers, many of whom are attending this conference for the first time.

Succession Planning

In addition to its annual conference, PYC has incorporated succession planning into its mandate. Committee members recognize the importance of sharing information with future members. This includes but is not limited to existing/ongoing campaigns internal to OPSEU/SEFPO and/or external that may involve other unions and/or labour affiliates. In addition, members elected as alternates at the regional meetings are called upon, for instance, to assist with the annual Young Workers Conference and to work with their regional delegate on other initiatives when necessary.

The purpose is to ensure a smooth transition if the alternate assumes the delegate position on the committee.

Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel (RAA)

Composition and General Information

The Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel (RAA) was formed within OPSEU/SEFPO in 1982. In 2022, the RAA became a provincial equity committee and was formally recognized in Article 19.6 of the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution.

The RAA is composed of two members from each of OPSEU/SEFPO's seven Regions. Members are selected triennially by the RAA from interested members who apply to fill vacancies within their Region.

The RAA provides representation and support to OPSEU/SEFPO's 2SLGBTQIA+ members. Its constitutional mandate is to help create networks within the Regions, develop and promote programs that encourage members of these communities to participate in union activities, and increase awareness and understanding of their issues throughout the membership. The Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel's mandate is to do the following:

- creating networks within OPSEU/SEFPO's Regions;
- developing and promoting programs that encourage 2SLGBTQIA+ members to participate in union activities; and
- increasing awareness and understanding of issues affecting 2SLGBTQIA+ members throughout the union

Significant Milestones and Work of the Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel

Pride

Every year, the Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel participates in and promotes Pride celebrations across the province. In 2014, World Pride was held in Toronto, and the Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel organized a number of events that took place throughout the entire World Pride Week. The Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel encourages all OPSEU/SEFPO members to get involved in Pride celebrations wherever they are held.

International Day of Pink

The RAA has promoted the International Day of Pink and encouraged members to raise awareness of homophobia, transphobia, discrimination and bullying.

It is commemorated annually on the second Wednesday in April.

Safe Schools Campaign

The Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel has supported the Egale Canada's Safe Schools campaign by promoting it to OPSEU/SEFPO members and encouraging them to get involved.

Eldercare Campaign

The Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel has raised awareness among OPSEU/SEFPO members of the distinct issues that older 2SLGBTQIA+ people face in social areas such as services, health care and institutions. These issues have been identified by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in a report that the Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel has posted online.

Gender Variance and Trans Issues

The RAA advocates for greater awareness and understanding of issues affecting trans and gender-diverse members, including discrimination, harassment, accommodation and barriers to full participation in workplaces and the union.

Solidarity with francophone members and the Provincial Francophone Committee

After consultation with the Provincial Francophone Committee, and as an act of solidarity with OPSEU/SEFPO's francophone members, the Rainbow Alliance agreed to change the official name of their group to Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel, and to refer to their name as such, whether they are communicating in English or French. (Arc-en-ciel means "Rainbow" in French.)

Jewish Caucus (JC)

Composition and General Information

The Jewish Caucus was formed in 2025 to represent, support, and advocate for Jewish members across OPSEU/SEFPO. The Caucus provides a space for members and allies to connect, organize, and raise awareness of issues affecting Jewish members, including prejudice, exclusion, discrimination, and barriers to participation in Union life. The Caucus works to foster understanding of Jewish history, culture, and lived experience within OPSEU/SEFPO and the broader community. Through education, outreach, and collaboration with other equity groups, the Caucus promotes a respectful and inclusive union environment grounded in equity and solidarity.

The Caucus meets regularly throughout the year to plan and carry out its activities.

The Jewish Caucus Logo

The Caucus introduced a new logo as part of its efforts to build visibility and strengthen its identity within OPSEU/SEFPO.

The logo reflects Jewish peoplehood and resilience, drawing on symbols rooted in a long and continuous history. The Star of David and flame represent continuity and connection across time. The logo incorporates Jewish symbolism while reflecting the values of solidarity, equity, and inclusion that are central to both the labour movement and the Jewish community.

The design represents the connection between Jewish identity, equity, and collective action within OPSEU/SEFPO.

Milestones and Activities

During Convention 2025, the Jewish Caucus held its first in-person gathering to introduce itself, answer members' questions, and begin building connections across regions and sectors.

The Caucus works closely with the Equity Unit to strengthen inclusion and representation by contributing to the diversity and observances calendar to improve recognition of Jewish cultural and community observances and by participating in broader Equity initiatives.

Events

Member engagement and education are central to the Caucus' activities.

Recent events include:

- A virtual Rosh Hashanah gathering marking the Jewish New Year, where Jewish members and allies explored Jewish cultural traditions and their connections to values of renewal, solidarity, and reflection
- A virtual Holocaust Education Week event featuring a screening of the documentary *Sabotage* followed by a facilitated discussion. The program explored themes of resistance, solidarity, and moral courage and connected Holocaust education to labour values, collective action, and the importance of standing against antisemitism.
- An in-person gathering to share in the story, traditions, and spirit of Passover, a meaningful Jewish holiday of remembrance and reflection
- A Jewish Heritage Month presentation highlighting the notable contributions of Jewish workers to the labour movement, human rights, and community building. The event celebrated the rich history, diverse cultures, and lasting contributions of Jewish communities across Ontario.

The Caucus has expanded its visibility across the Union through regular communications, educational initiatives, and engagement with members from diverse sectors and regions.

Community Engagement

In addition to events and educational initiatives, the Caucus prioritizes outreach and solidarity through regular communications recognizing important moments in Jewish history, culture, and community life.

Members of the Jewish Caucus attend Equity gatherings, providing important opportunities to connect with other equity groups, share experiences, and learn from one another.

The Caucus has begun operating an information booth at OPSEU/SEFPO annual Convention, engaging with members from across Ontario, sharing information about the Caucus, answering questions, and encouraging participation in its activities.

Coalition of Racialized Workers (CoRW)

Composition and General Information

The Coalition of Racialized Workers (formerly known as the Workers of Colour Caucus) was formed in 2003. In 2022, CoRW became a provincial equity committee and was formally recognized in Article 19.7 of the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution.

The Coalition is composed of two members from each of OPSEU/SEFPO's seven Regions. Members are selected triennially by the Coalition from interested members who apply to fill vacancies within their Region.

The Coalition works to create networks within the Regions, develop and promote programs that encourage Black and racialized members to participate in union activities, and increase awareness and understanding of issues affecting Black and racialized members throughout the membership.

History, Milestones and Work of the Coalition of Racialized Workers

The Living Wall and the Social Mapping Project

For five years, the Coalition of Racialized Workers tracked the participation and involvement of racialized members at Convention through the Living Wall project. This project pre-dated, and led to, the development of the OPSEU/SEFPO Social Mapping Project (SMP) in 2010. The Coalition of Racialized Workers was instrumental in lobbying for the more extensive Social Mapping Project. The Social Mapping Project is a multi-phase project that began with a demographic survey of the membership and continued with recommendations to ensure that OPSEU/SEFPO has systems in place to welcome participation from all equity groups within OPSEU/SEFPO.

Pride

Each year, the Coalition hosts a Pride breakfast in Toronto before the parade.

Regional Networks and Activities

CoRW works to build networks within OPSEU/SEFPO's Regions and supports regional activities that engage Black and racialized members.

Toronto Caribbean Carnival

The Coalition of Racialized Workers participates every year in Toronto's Caribbean festival (formerly Caribana), as well as other Caribbean carnival festivals in other areas of the province.

Live and Let Live Fund

The Coalition raises funds for OPSEU/SEFPO's Live and Let Live fund (a charity that assists people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa and Ontario) at various Coalition of Racialized Workers events.

OPSEU/SEFPO Convention

Each year, the Coalition of Racialized Workers has a meeting at Convention to encourage new members to get involved in their regions. The Coalition also provides a safe place for members of colour to discuss concerns and issues.

Black History Month and other commemoration days

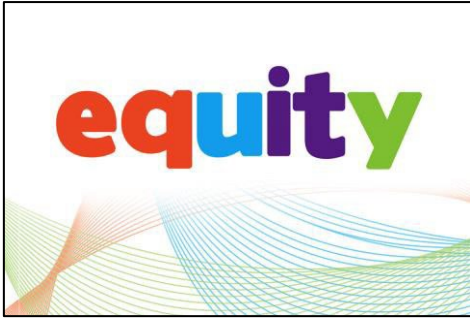
Every February, the Coalition of Racialized Workers promotes Black History Month through publicity materials (including banners and posters), events across the province, and online content highlighting the significant contributions of Black Canadians. The Coalition also releases statements to raise awareness among OPSEU/SEFPO members of annual commemoration days such as Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Racism.

International Solidarity

The Coalition of Racialized Workers supports international solidarity efforts by financially supporting the family of a South African worker, participating in OPSEU/SEFPO's International Solidarity Leadership Tours and raising funds.

Colouring Our Path Biographies

"Colouring Our Path" is a biographical project that documents the contributions of workers of colour at OPSEU/SEFPO. It raises awareness of the history and contributions of workers of colour to the labour movement and human rights generally.



Equity Information on the OPSEU/SEFPO Website

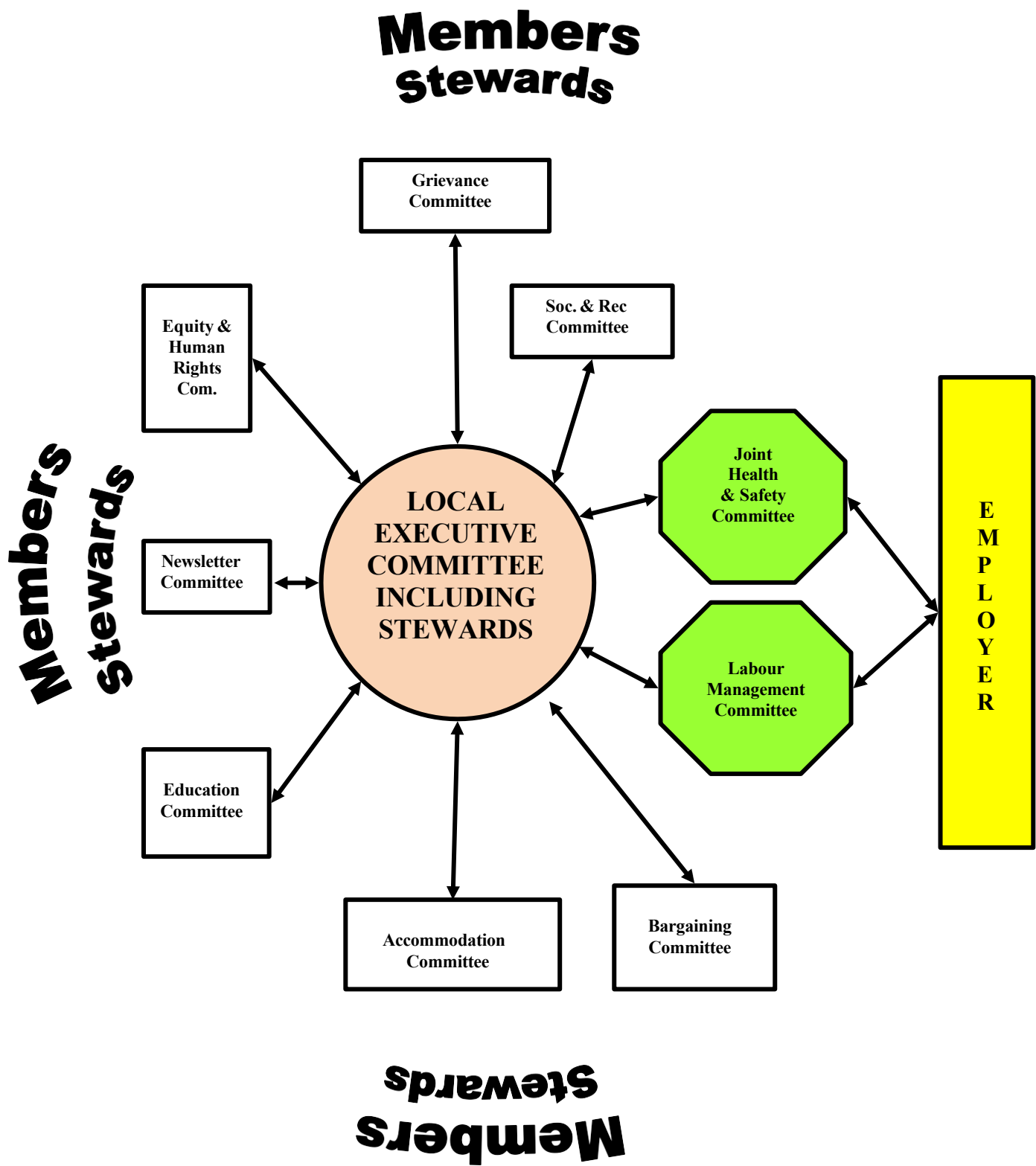
[Equity Unit Website](#)

The Equity Unit provides advice, research and support in the following key areas:

1. For provincial and regional committees and caucuses on issues related to women, people with disabilities, workers of colour, Aboriginal workers, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, intersex, asexual, queer, questioning and two-spirited (LGBTTIQQ2S) workers, francophones and young workers.
2. In collaboration with OPSEU/SEFPO's Equity Committees and Caucuses and the Member Education Unit, the Equity Unit also plans equity-themed conferences over the course of the calendar year.
3. To members in relation to member-to-member harassment and discrimination complaints.
4. To members and staff in relation to human rights and equity issues at the Local level.

You can find out more about our work, how to get involved and related resources on our website.

The Local Structure



Local Officers/ Different Locals

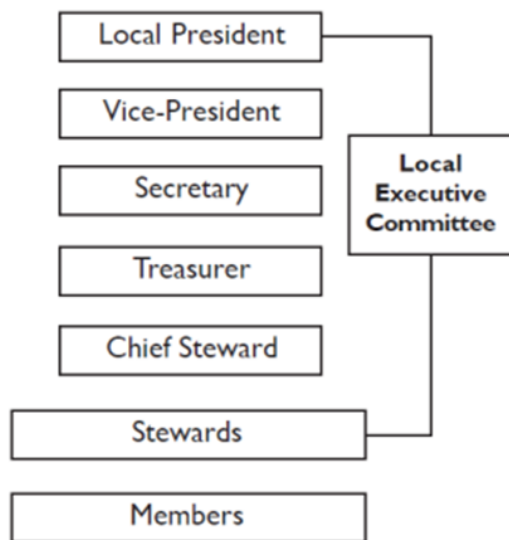
Definitions:

Single-unit local = one unit and one employer

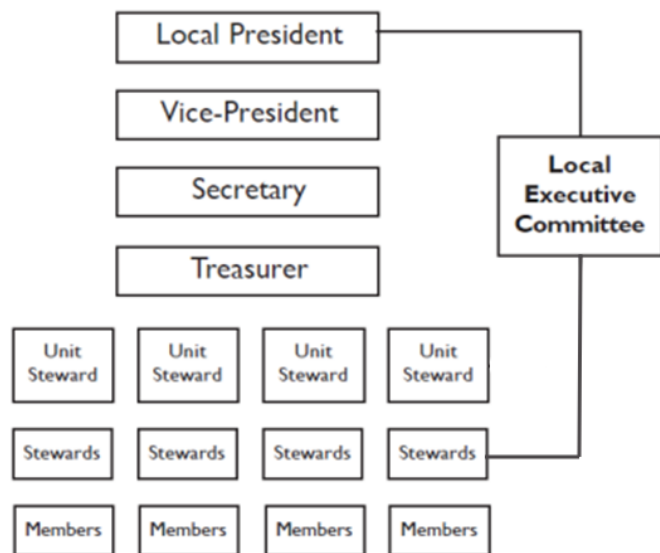
Multi-unit local = more than one unit and one employer

Composite local = more than one unit and more than one employer

Single-unit local



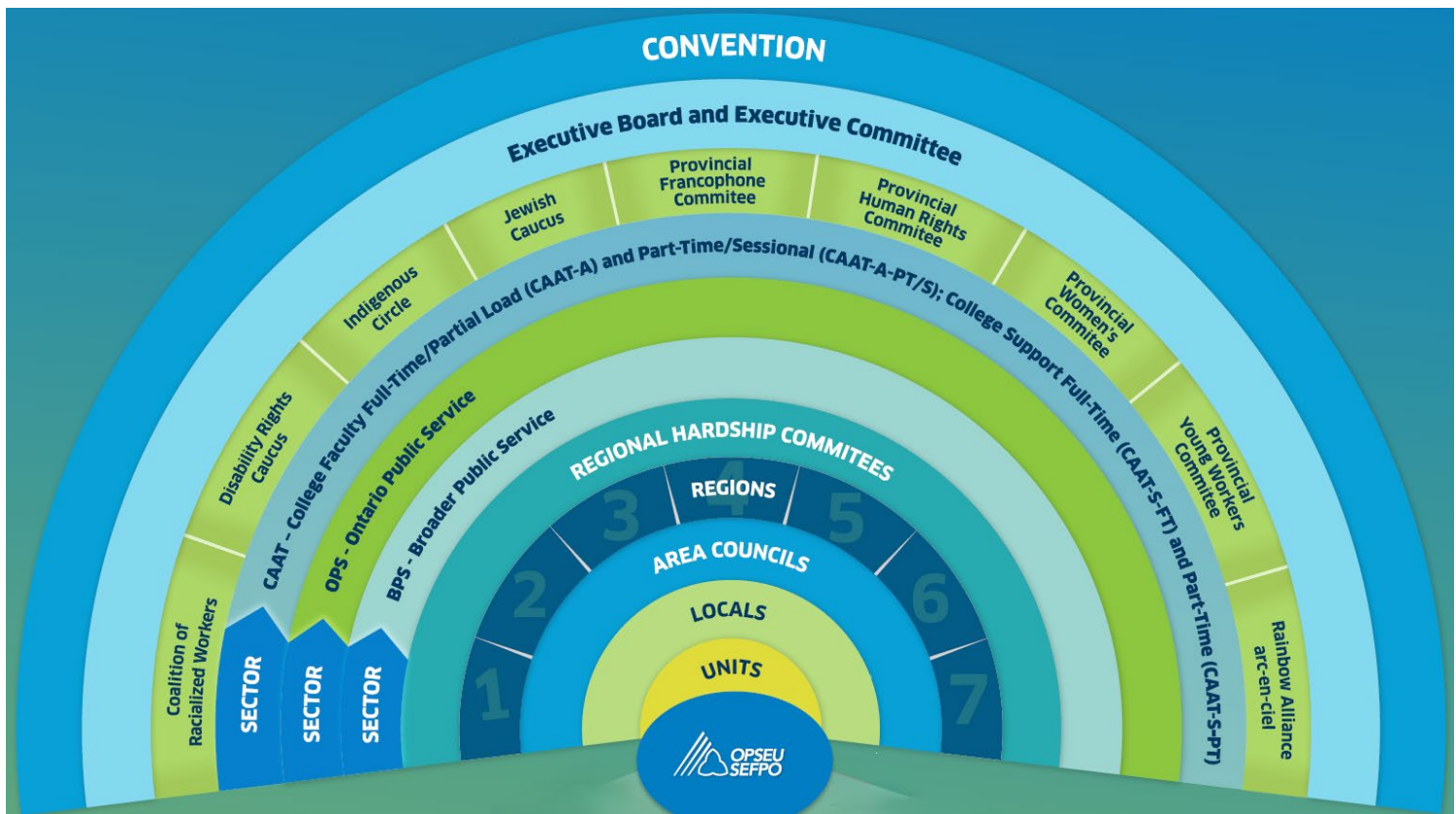
Multi-unit or Composite local



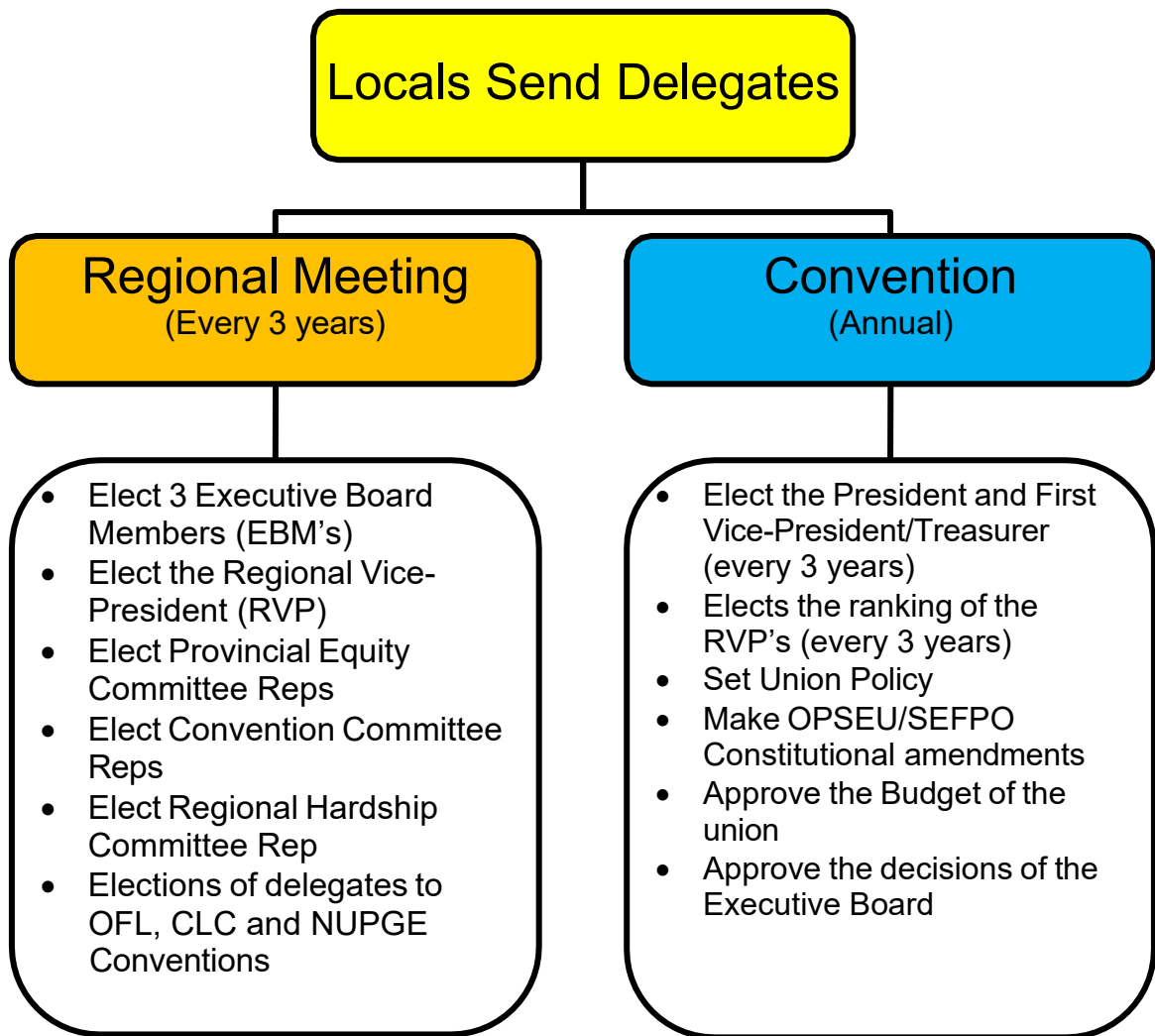
What region are you in?



The Local in OPSEU/SEFPO and Labour Movement



OPSEU/SEFPO Decision Making



Annual Convention

The highest decision-making body

Convention delegates decide:

- Policy
- Amend the Constitution
- Elects the President
- Elects the 1st Vice-President Treasurer, and Appoints Auditors
- Passes budget
- Sets union dues
- Approves decisions of the executive board

The Executive Board

- Consists of 28 members: 21 Regional Executive Board Members (3 from each of the 7 regions) and 7 Equity Executive Board Members (EEBMs).
- Members are elected through Regional Meetings and province-wide equity elections.
- Serves a three-year term.
- Governs the Union between Annual Conventions.
- Establishes policies and provides strategic direction between Conventions.
- Develops and approves the proposed annual budget for presentation to Convention.
- Implements and oversees decisions made by Convention.

OPSEU/SEFPO Officers

The Executive Committee is made up of:

- President
- First Vice-President/Treasurer
- 7 Regional Vice-Presidents (RVPs)
- Equity Vice-President (EVP)

The Executive Committee:

- Meets regularly between Executive Board meetings
- Provides leadership and direction for the Union
- Makes decisions between Executive Board meetings within the authority granted by the Constitution and the Executive Board
- Oversees the implementation of Executive Board and Convention decisions

OPSEU/SEFPO President



JP Hornick

- Chair of the Board
- CEO of the corporation
- Administers staff
- Hiring authority
- Runs the day-to-day business of the union
- Makes policy decisions between officers' meetings
- Chief elected official of the union

OPSEU/SEFPO First Vice-President/Treasurer

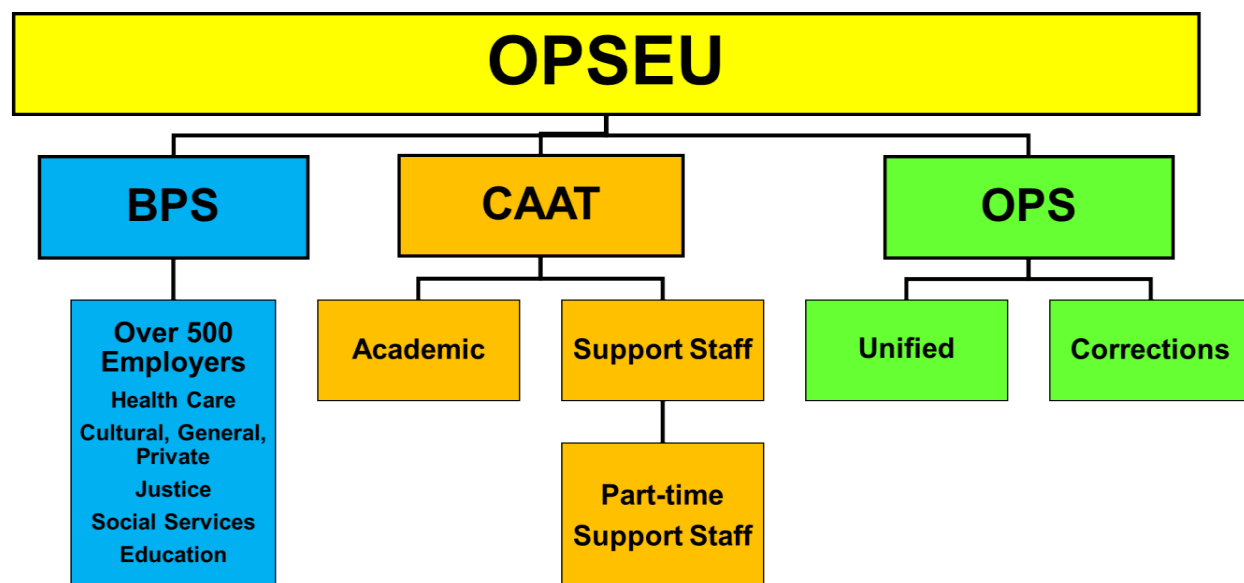


Laurie Nancekivell

- Automatic replacement for the President
- Presents and monitors the budget
- Oversees Departments
 - Accounting
 - Information Services
 - Building Services
 - OPSEU/SEFPO Enterprises

[Members of the OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board](#)

Sectors of the Union and their Legislation



OPSEU/SEFPO Organizational Chart

OPSEU/SEFPO Divisions	OPSEU/SEFPO Regions	OPSEU/SEFPO Sectors (7 Regions, Over 500 Locals)	
Executive Division President First Vice President/Treasurer Executive Assistants Corporate Secretary	Region 1 Windsor London	CAAT Community Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology	BPS Broader Public Service Bargaining Units
Financial Services Division Conferences Unit Payroll Unit Accounting Unit Information Technology Unit Membership Services Unit Operations Services Unit Mailroom/Print Shop Unit	Region 2 Guelph Hamilton Niagara Owen Sound	Academic 1 Full-Time Academic 1 Partial-Load/Part-Time Academic	Cluster: Health Care 1. Ambulance 8. Long Term Care Facilities 10. Hospital Professionals Division (HPD) 11. Hospital Support 17. Community Health Care Professionals 18. Mental Health Division 19. CBS and Diagnostics
Employee Relations Division Employee Relations Unit	Region 3 Orillia Oshawa Peterborough	Support 1 Full-time Bargaining Unit 1 Part-time Bargaining Unit	Cluster: Cultural, General, Private 13. Municipalities 14. Private Contractors 16. MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation) 20. General including Crown agencies 26. Liquor Board Employees Division
Communications Division Communications Unit Equity Unit Member Education and Campaigns Unit Organizing	Region 4 Brockville Kingston Ottawa	OPS Ontario Public Service	
Local Services and Collective Bargaining Division Regional Offices Negotiations Research	Region 5 Victoria Park Wellesley	Unified Unit	Cluster: Justice 7. Correctional Centres
Legal Services Division General Counsel Arbitrations Unit Health and Safety Unit Pension and Benefits	Region 6 North Bay Sault Ste. Marie Sudbury Timmins	Corrections Unit	Cluster: Social Services 2. Developmental Services 4. Children's Aid Societies 5. Community Agencies 15. Children's Treatment Centres
	Region 7 Dryden Thunder Bay		Cluster: Education 3. Board of Education 9. Universities

Local Finances

Spending Authority at the Local Level – Article 29

Source Treasurers Manual

- I. A duly constituted Local Executive Committee (LEC) has the authority to authorize expenditures for legitimate union purposes. The LEC remains accountable to the membership and should report expenditures through its regular financial reporting.
- II. Significant expenditures outside the approved budget should be reported to the membership in accordance with the Local's bylaws and financial reporting practices.
- III. In the absence of bylaws to the contrary, an LEC may spend monies in excess of the budget or in the absence of a budget. However, a Local may adopt bylaws that restrict the LEC to expenditures within the budget and require explicit **prior** approval for expenditures outside the budget.
- IV. An LEC may still spend monies without preparing a budget unless there are bylaws to the contrary. However, failure to present a budget or comply with constitutional requirements may result in intervention by the Executive Board where appropriate.
- V. Accountability to the membership for expenditures is clearly required of the LEC, especially if no budget has been submitted. This is assured as well by **Article 29.6**, which requires that the membership elect trustees to examine the books and report to the first General Membership Meeting following each six-month audit of the Local's books.

Petty Cash:

The use of petty cash is generally discouraged. Whenever practical, purchases should be reimbursed through the Local's normal cheque or electronic payment process, supported by original receipts.

Supplies Required:

The Treasurer should ensure the Local has access to:

- Cheques (if used)
- Online banking access
- Deposit slips (where applicable)
- Current TAR forms
- Expense claim forms
- Financial tracking records
- Schedule A and Schedule B forms.

General

Accountability—Disbursements do not require head office approval. Responsibility and accountability for approving expenses lies at the Local level, and approval is given from and by members at meetings.

Surplus funds at Year-End—Surplus funds at year-end will remain with the Local to be used for continuing trade union business. It is therefore important for the Local to have a budget projection for the coming year.

Legitimate Expenses:

Generally, expenses fall into the following categories:

- (a) Rental of meeting space;
- (b) Local meeting costs (e.g., mail, email services, other communication methods);
- (c) Postage, printing, communication and related administrative expenses;
- (d) Approved expenses of alternate delegates or observers to OPSEU/SEFPO meetings;
- (e) Honoraria or remuneration paid to Local Officers must be approved by the Local membership and administered in accordance with OPSEU/SEFPO financial and payroll procedures. Head Office currently administers taxable payments.
- (f) Contributions to OPSEU/SEFPO area councils.
- (g) Communication expenses incurred while conducting authorized union business (e.g., telephone, internet or virtual meeting expenses) should be supported by appropriate documentation.
- (h) Other expenses, within the Local's ability to pay, which are incurred for legitimate trade union purposes. (Examples include childcare/dependent care, public transit tokens, mileage, refreshments for union business, education materials, speakers' honoraria, community solidarity campaigns, etc.)

Expense Accounts Paid by Head Office:

Members may claim certain expenses incurred for union business while attending conventions, demand-setting meetings, negotiations, regional meetings, and educational seminars.

Allowable expenses are detailed on the “**Membership Expense Claim**” forms obtained from your OPSEU/SEFPO regional office and are generally available at union functions. It is important that these forms are legible, filled out properly, and submitted to head office.

Members Claiming Expenses from their Local:

If an individual claims expenses from the Local, a Membership Expense Claim Form should be used, and the Treasurer should review/approve the expenditure. The Treasurer

must keep expense claim forms on file as the supporting receipts for cheque payment and audit review.

Receipts:

Original receipts must substantiate all expenditures. These documents and the cancelled cheques are to be retained by the Treasurer with the Local's financial records for expenses claimed against the Local and are to be available for audit by the trustees as required by **Article 29.6** of the Constitution.

Financial Control

Article 29.10.1:

All funds of Locals shall be used only for legitimate trade union purposes. Accounting for revenue and disbursements shall be done in a proper and business-like manner. Except for reasonable amounts in petty cash accounts, all expenditures shall be by cheque and shall be properly supported by vouchers. Where Local bylaws permit, and where proper supporting documentation is available, Local expenditures may be made by pre-authorized payments or by online banking. The signing officers of a Local shall be any two of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer (or Secretary-Treasurer) and Chief Steward.

Article 29.10.2:

Financial control of Units shall rest with the Local Executive Committee. Locals and/or units shall have full control of funds they may raise through their own activities or through Local assessments. Notwithstanding the Local's financial control, the Local shall be obligated to supply sufficient funds for the holding of Unit general and negotiating meetings but may retain authority to make the necessary arrangements for the said meetings.

For an explanation of the trustee's function, see **Roles and Responsibilities of Local Union Officers in this Toolkit**.

Funds Raised through Local Initiatives:

The Constitution provides for Locals to have full control over funds they may raise through their own activities (29.10.2). Locals may wish to establish a social and recreation committee to arrange and fund presentations and other social activities. With membership approval, the Local **must** set up a bank account separate from the operating account to keep funds raised through Local activities. For example, a Local may raise money through ticket sales or by assessing the costs of any social activities. If a Local sets up a separate account for social activities, the Treasurer is accountable to the membership, not to head office. In that case, there would be the Treasurer's report on union funds and a separate report on the social and recreation committee funds.

Local Budget

Article 29.10.5 of the Constitution provides for the Local Executive Committee (LEC) to present a budget to the General Membership Meeting of the Local.

Budgets have several different purposes. **First**, they are a financial planning tool. **Second**, they serve as a guide or leadership tool, giving members a greater sense of direction and purpose by establishing goals. Budgets, however, should be flexible enough to account for new circumstances. **Third**, they serve as a financial control tool.

There are two main types of budgets: **operating** and **capital**. An **operating budget** is a plan for action for the coming year. A **capital budget** is a plan for purchasing new equipment and for obtaining the necessary funds. Operating budgets are concerned with the immediate future, and the capital budget with longer-term spending needs.

Operating Budget:

The process of drawing up an operating budget involves several distinct steps.

- 1) The LEC must agree on a figure for estimated revenue. This would include the four rebates per year. The entire Local's planned operating expenditures hinge on this amount.
- 2) The LEC then takes the previous year's expenses and, based on past experience and intelligent guesswork as to the future, estimates expenses for the upcoming year.
- 3) The LEC determines the number of meetings to be held and the expenses involved, e.g., meeting room costs, coffee, mailings, etc. The Local is obligated to supply sufficient funds for holding unit, general and negotiating meetings.
- 4) A very important part of setting up a budget is determining Local objectives and goals. The LEC should give careful thought to what the Local's objectives should be in the short and long term. Depending on the goals a Local sets, it may establish committees to handle the work required to attain those objectives. Such committees might be a women's committee, a social and recreation committee, an education committee, a legislative committee, a community service committee, a bylaw committee, etc. Some committees will need a budget based on their action plan for the coming year. Such committee budgets would be incorporated into the Local's annual budget.
- 5) The LEC should give careful thought to how to be more cost-conscious and where to cut expenses. An example would be meeting room expenses. Depending on the location, Local meetings can be held in regional offices, union halls, or district labour council halls, if available.

- 6) Once the Local's objectives have been determined and expenses estimated, a budget is drawn up showing estimated revenue, estimated expenses and estimated cash income.

Membership Approval:

The budget must be presented by the Local Executive Committee (LEC) to the annual general meeting for approval. Keep in mind that some members may not appreciate that the budget presented before their meeting is a policymaking instrument. They tend to regard it as a statement of fact, like the Treasurer's financial report, and may therefore accept it with very little thought. A budget is not a statement of fact. It is a statement of intention, and it should therefore be regarded as an instrument of policy over which the membership is entitled to exercise control. The budget also authorizes the executive to spend Local funds without seeking approval from the general membership.

Budget Control:

It is, of course, of little use having a budget if there is no procedure for regular checking to see how well forecasts measure up to reality. At the Local executive meeting, the Treasurer must report on any differences between the budgeted amount and the actual funds spent in the current year compared with the previous year. It may be necessary to adjust the budgeted amounts for items that are significantly over or underbudget.

OPSEU/SEFPO Resources

Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Respect

The Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Respect are delivered at the start of OPSEU/SEFPO events (English and French). Please note that these remain in effect for the duration of the event.

Utilize the [OPSEU/SEFPO Event Guide](#) for support on delivering a Land Acknowledgement and the Statement of Respect.

OPSEU/SEFPO Local Funding Support

Funding Programs

In addition to Local dues rebates, OPSEU/SEFPO provides a variety of funding programs and financial supports to assist Locals in carrying out union business and supporting members.

Programs may include:

Local Time-Off Funding

Funding may be available to assist Locals with union-related activities such as grievance handling, representation, member engagement, and Local administration.

Start-Up Assistance

Newly organized Locals may be eligible for financial assistance and support to help establish their Local structure and operations.

Special Assistance

Locals experiencing financial difficulties may apply for special assistance in accordance with OPSEU/SEFPO policies and procedures.

Area Council and Labour Council Support

Financial assistance or reimbursement may be available for Local participation in Area Councils and Labour Councils.

Member Assistance and Legal Support

Certain funds and programs may be available to support members involved in matters arising from their employment or union activities, subject to eligibility requirements and approval processes.

Accessing Funding

Local officers should consult the most current OPSEU/SEFPO policies, procedures, forms, and staff resources for information regarding available funding programs, eligibility requirements, reimbursement rates, and application processes, as these may change over time.

Application for Local Communications Incentive Fund Rebate

Get online! Communications Incentive Fund for Locals

Purpose

The 2003 budget established a special fund to help Locals set up a reliable and secure email and Internet link for union business. This will speed our membership communications and help OPSEU/SEFPO reduce mailing costs.

What is it?

A one-time grant is an incentive to purchase equipment and an Internet connection and go “online.”

Who is eligible?

Any Local President can apply for the grant. Limit one per Local. Many Locals are already online, so the first priority will be given to Locals who do not yet have a secure Internet connection.

What is a secure email address?

A secure email address is one that will be confidential (i.e. non-employer) and allow you to receive fairly large document attachments.

What do you need to do to qualify for the incentive grant?

1. Set up a computer and an Internet connection that gives you a secure email address where you can communicate union business.
2. Submit a claim along with proof-of-purchase receipts totalling \$500 or more, and your secure email address. A \$500 rebate will be sent to your Local.

See the application form online.

Submit your request for a grant to:

OPSEU/SEFPO Communications, 100 Lesmill Road, Toronto,
M3B 3P8.

Email: opseucommunicationsdepartment@opseu.org

For further information, contact OPSEU/SEFPO

Communications: 1-800-268-7376 Ext. 8664

Local Union Officers

OPSEU/SEFPO Courses for Skills Building

OPSEU/SEFPO has developed a wide range of courses, including 1.5 day weekend educational courses and short courses ranging from 30 minutes to 6 hours long. All of our available courses are listed in the Member Education [Course Catalogue](#).

Note: Additional resources include Toolkits for the Local President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Glossary of Labour Terms and Acronyms

A

ACL - Association for Community Living.

Across-the-board adjustment - An identical change in pay for all employees in the group.

Adverse Impact Discrimination – A decision or policy that, while on its face is neutral, results in negative or differential treatment of groups designated under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Application for certification - A request by a trade union to the Ontario Labour Relations Board to be designated as the sole bargaining agent for a particular group of employees.

Arbitration - A process in which a single person or a panel hears both sides of a dispute and issues a decision (award) which binds both parties.

Assessments - Special charges levied by unions to meet particular financial needs.

ASU - Administrative Staff Union, representing managerial employees and excluded secretaries working for OPSEU/SEFPO.

B

Back pay - Wages due for past services.

Bargaining agent - A union that acts on behalf of employees in collective bargaining.

Bargaining right - The right of workers to negotiate through their chosen representatives, or the right of a union certified by the Labour Board to represent the members in collective bargaining.

Bargaining unit - The employee group deemed appropriate for collective bargaining.

Factors include community of interest, history of collective bargaining, work performed, organization and representation of employees.

Broader Public Service (BPS) - OPSEU/SEFPO members outside the OPS and the colleges whose funding sources directly or indirectly is the government.

Bumping - Use of seniority to displace a junior employee when conditions require temporary or permanent layoffs.

Burden of Proof – Which party bears the onus of proving their case either pro or con. In dismissal/discipline and unfair labour practice charges, the employer bears the burden of proving their actions were appropriate.

Bylaws - Local provisions to supplement our Constitution. They need approval from the OPSEU/SEFPO President to be effective.

C

CAAT - College of Applied Arts and Technology. OPSEU/SEFPO represents faculty and support staff in the colleges.

Call-back pay - Required pay for a minimum number of hours when a worker is called back to work outside scheduled working hours.

Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) - Organization of union editors providing resources and help. See resources.

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) - Canada's national central labour body, representing over 70 percent of organized labour.

CCBA – Colleges Collective Bargaining Act

CECBA - Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, which governs bargaining for the OPS.

Certification - Official designation that a union is the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for a group of workers.

Check-off - A clause in a collective agreement authorizing and instructing the employer to deduct union dues.

Classification plan - A job evaluation method comparing jobs against a salary scale.

Compensatory time off - (1) Time off in lieu of pay for workers who work overtime. (2) Extra time allowed when a holiday falls on an employee's regular day off.

Conciliation and Mediation - Processes which provide assistance to resolve labour disputes. Conciliation is a necessary step toward a legal strike or lockout.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) - Statistics Canada's monthly study on retail prices of selected consumer items.

Contracting Out - Having work performed by an outside contractor and not by regular employees in the unit.

Convention - Assembly of delegates to debate and determine union policies, elect the two full-time officers of the union and amend the Constitution.

Craft Union - A union whose membership is restricted to workers having a particular skill, e.g. printers, electricians.

D

Decertification - A Labour Board decision to withdraw certification of a union as the exclusive bargaining representative.

Demotion - Transferring to a job with lesser responsibility or pay.

Discipline clause - Section of a collective agreement giving management the right to penalize employees for cause.

Discrimination – any act which treats a person differently based on their inclusion as one of the designated groups covered under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Downgrading - Demotion of a position through reduction of its duties and responsibilities.

Dues - Money paid by union members to support their union.

E

Employee Relations Committee (ERC) - A labour/management committee.

Employment Equity - The goal of removing employment barriers and discriminatory practices.

Equity Executive Board Member (EEBM) – The OPSEU/SEFPO Board has seven EEBMs to ensure the perspectives of equity-seeking members are represented at the highest level of the Union.

Executive Board Member (EBM) - Each of OPSEU/SEFPO's seven regions elects three EBMs to run the union between conventions.

F

Failure to represent - Charge that a union has violated a member's right to fair representation.

Free collective bargaining – Negotiations where workers have the right to strike in support of contract demands.

G

Good faith - An essential element of collective bargaining, requiring the parties to make every reasonable effort to reach an agreement.

Grievance - Complaint by one or more employees or the union that management has breached the collective agreement or labour-related legislation.

Grievance Settlement Board (GSB) - an arbitration board which hears grievances from the OPS.

H

Harassment – A course of vexatious behaviour that is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwanted. (a violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code - OHRC)

I

Interest arbitration - A hearing at which an arbitrator is called upon to determine the contents of a collective agreement, usually because the workers are barred from striking to support their contract demands.

Informational picketing - A protest designed to inform people about issues; not to bar people from crossing a picket line.

Injunction - A court order restraining an individual or organization from committing or engaging in certain acts.

In solidarity – 1) A common union salutation. 2) A newsletter put out by members for OPSEU/SEFPO Stewards.

International Labour Organization (ILO) - A specialized United Nations agency that works to improve labour conditions, living standards and economic and social stability.

Internal organizing - Building union strength through maximum member participation.

J

Job Content - The duties and responsibilities that make up a job.

Job Description - A specific description of a single position.

Job Evaluation - Process of determining ratings under certain criteria for comparing jobs under a classification plan.

Job Security - Contract language protecting a worker's job.

L

Labour Council - An organization of various unions at the municipal or district level.

Labour-Management Committee (LMC) - A committee of management and worker representatives to deal with joint concerns and try to resolve them. Also known as employee relations committee (ERC) or union college committee (UCC).

Layoff - Temporary, prolonged or final separation from employment as a result of lack of work.

Leave of absence - Permitted absence of an employee for a limited period.

Local Executive Committee (LEC) - Local Stewards (or unit Stewards if the Local has more than one unit). Directs Local union activities between Local meetings.

Lockout - A labour dispute in which management refuses to let employees work, to force a settlement on its terms.

M

Management rights - Management has all rights except as restricted by law or as bargained for by the union. Specific management rights are often spelled out in a contract, typically covering hiring, discipline, work organization and staffing levels.

Mediation - A process for resolving disputes in which a mediator acts as a neutral go-between.

Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) - Joint ministry-level labour/management committee in the OPS which takes up ministry-wide or unresolved Local issues.

MPAC – Municipal Property Assessment Corporation

N

Nominee – The union's or employer's nominee to a Board of Arbitration, either Interest or Rights.

NUPGE – National Union of Public and General Employees

O

On-call time - Hours during which an employee is subject to recall, if needed, usually in case of an emergency.

Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) - Provincial wing of the CLC, which organizes campaigns and speaks for labour in the province.

Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) - The body which certifies trade unions and adjudicates unfair labour practices and other charges under the Labour Relations Act (OLRA), the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act (CCBA) and the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act (CECBA).

OPS - Ontario Public Service.

Ontario Public Service Staff Union (OPSSU) - The union which represents all OPSEU/SEFPO employees except managerial staff and excluded secretaries, who are represented by ASU (above), and excluded staff.

Organizing model - An approach to union leadership which involves members in solving problems.

Overtime - Hours worked in excess of the maximum set by statute or collective agreement.

P

Posting - Required display of vacancies available for competition within a bargaining unit.

Probation - A trial period of employment during which a worker may be released for failure to meet the requirements of the position.

Promotion - A move to a position with higher duties and pay.

Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRC) - An OPSEU/SEFPO committee of one elected member per region to promote and educate members on human rights and equity issues.

Provincial Women's Committee (PWC) - An OPSEU/SEFPO committee with one elected member per region to promote and educate members on gender issues.

R

Rand Formula - Requirement that an employer deduct dues from every employee in a bargaining unit, whether or not they have joined the union. Named for Mr. Justice Ivan Rand who created it to settle a strike over union security at Ford in 1945.

Recognition - Employer acceptance of a union as the exclusive bargaining agent for employees in the bargaining unit. Its names exclude positions.

Red circling - Keeping pay rate after demotion to a lower classification or following a job evaluation plan which finds a position has been overpaid.

Reinstatement - Restoration of a dismissed or demoted employee to their former job.

Reopener - A contract clause that allows the parties to renegotiate a portion of the agreement (usually wages) before the expiry date. It must contain a provision that allows consensual conciliation and arbitration if the parties are unable to reach an agreement.

Retroactive Pay - Payment for a period in the past covered by a wage increase.

Rights arbitration - A hearing at which an arbitrator is called upon to determine the meaning of a collective agreement, normally the final stage in a grievance procedure.

S

Scab - A worker who refuses to join co-workers in a strike or a worker who crosses a striking union's picket line to perform their work.

Seniority - System recognizing length of service for wage progression, job security, vacation and other benefits.

Service model - Union leadership that solves members' problems, but doesn't encourage members to work together to solve problems for themselves.

Severance pay - Payment to a worker whose employment is permanently ended.

Shift differential - Premium pay for work during inconvenient hours.

Shop Steward - Union official elected to represent a group of workers.

Slowdown - A deliberate slowing of work short of a strike, to force concessions from an employer.

Solidarity - Identification with a group who share common interests.

Straight-time pay - Regular wages exclusive of premium pay, overtime and bonuses.

Strike - An organized work stoppage or work refusal by employees to back a bargaining position.

Strike benefits/strike pay - Money paid by a union to striking members.

Strike fund - Union reserve to provide strike pay and cover other strike costs.

Strike vote - A vote of bargaining unit members on whether to authorize a strike.

Successor rights - The right of a union to continue to represent employees when the operation is sold or transferred to other owners.

Suspension - Removal from work as a disciplinary measure.

T

Technological change - Introduction of new equipment, machinery or production techniques.

Total Quality Management (TQM) - One of many joint labour/management participation schemes.

Trusteeship - Taking over the administration of a Local union's affairs by the central union.

U

Unfair labour practice - Employer or union activities that violate the Labour Relations Act, such as intimidation, coercion, interference, or failure to bargain in good faith.

Union jurisdiction - Union authority over certain types of work, certain workers or specific areas assigned by the union or central labour body with which it is affiliated.

Union label/union bug - Proof that a product is made under union conditions.

Union security clauses - Contract language that protects the institutional life of the union, such as check-off and notice language.

Union shop - Requirement that every worker covered by the collective agreement must become and remain a member of the union.

V

Voluntary recognition - Employer agreement that a union is the bargaining agent for a group of its employees without a labour board decision

W

WSIB - a system paying workers who are injured on the job.

Wage range - Minimum and maximum rates for a job.