



**ORGANIZE.**  
**FIGHT.**  
**WIN.**

**A GUIDE TO OPSEU/SEFPO FOR NEW MEMBERS**

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# Welcome to OPSEU/SEFPO!

## A message from JP and Laurie

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As a member of OPSEU/SEFPO, you have the ability to organize together with your coworkers, build your power and win meaningful victories in your workplace, in your community, and beyond.

This is what our union, OPSEU/SEFPO is – a collective of workers who tackle unfairness and injustice by working together, creating a plan, and making things better for ourselves.

Right now, you may not know how to start. But you know that you are surrounded by problems and challenges that seem too big to tackle on your own. You may be worried about consequences for speaking up by yourself.

You may also have a dream of quality, accessible public services and better jobs for yourself and others. And you believe other members want that as well.

How do workers solve workplace problems and advance social and economic justice in the face of big challenges? We involve everyone in making the plan to win, and by taking action together. There is both power and safety in numbers. When the vast majority of us collectively demand change from our employer or our government, we become an unstoppable force.

In OPSEU/SEFPO, we are committed to organizing to win. Together, we can learn how to do this. We need to first build the skills and then exercise our collective strength.

This guide was written to give you tools and knowledge you need to take action. You will learn how collective bargaining and political action work in OPSEU/SEFPO, and how to become a leader in our union to fight for social justice and equity. In it, you will find a roadmap to connect with others, both members and staff, so we can organize, fight, and win together.

You will find many small, practical steps you can take to build your skills, knowledge and power.

Here is the first one – when you have finished reading this guide, pick one co-worker you know, and give them a copy. Ask them to read it. In a week, follow up and ask them what workplace problem they thought about when they read it.

That is all it takes to get started – a direct conversation with someone you already know.

You aren't taking these steps alone – with you are the 200,000 members and staff of OPSEU/SEFPO. As our Provincial Young Workers Committee says, Solidarity is a Verb!

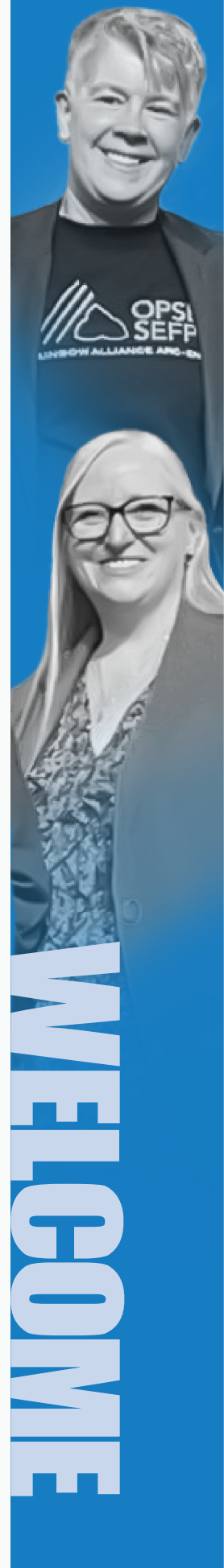
It is the source of our power.

Together, we will organize for the change we need.

In solidarity,

**JP Hornick, OPSEU/SEFPO President**

**Laurie Nancekivell, OPSEU/SEFPO First Vice-President/Treasurer**



# Starting your journey with OPSEU/SEFPO

Organizing a union is challenging. Winning can change your life.



For more than 100 years, OPSEU/SEFPO members have fought to build public service worker power and to advance social and economic justice for all workers. Our shared vision is a more just

Ontario for all workers!

As a member, you and your coworkers belong to a local union within OPSEU/SEFPO. You are a part of various groups of workers, both within your union and in the community, to advance worker interests.

The basic building block of collective power is each one of us, the members. You, along with other members and staff, work together to build the bargaining and political power necessary to win.

## Step one: Sign an OPSEU/SEFPO membership card

To fully participate in our union, you must first join by signing a membership card. If you have not already done so, scan the QR code or click on this link: <https://hub03.opseu.org/Forms/emaweb> to sign an OPSEU/SEFPO membership card now. This is a crucial first step in committing to collective action and building the high participation numbers we need to win!



**Organizing action:** Explain to one co-worker why it is important that every member participate in the union. Ask them to sign a membership card too!

## Step two: Sign up for the OPSEU/SEFPO Member Portal

The Member Portal gives you secure on line access to services and member information. It's where you'll find important information about your union!

Be sure to update your contact info on the Member Portal so we can connect with you about the things that matter most to you. Scan the QR code or visit [members.opseu.org](https://members.opseu.org) and sign up today!



STARTING YOUR JOURNEY



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## Step three: Stay connected!

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Visit our website: [opseu.org](https://opseu.org)

The website is where you'll find the latest news, campaigns, educational opportunities, event postings, information from your sector, and so much more!

Follow us on social media

-  @opseu
-  @opseusefpo
-  @OPSEUSEFPO
-  @opseusefpo
-  @opseu

Email

Each week, all members get OPSEU/SEFPO This Week in their inbox, an end-of-week summary email that lists the bargaining and pressure campaigns underway, and other communications as well. The tools and information you need to participate will be right there.

**Action:** Look for OPSEU/SEFPO's most recent campaigns on the website, social media, and OPSEU/SEFPO This Week email and sign on to them.

Share the campaign information with a co-worker and tell them why you think it is important that we support each other's campaigns. Ask them to sign on too!



STARTING YOUR JOURNEY

# Our union and how we work together



With approximately 200,000 members in Ontario, OPSEU/SEFPO has the resources to offer:

- **Three OPSEU/SEFPO Head Office buildings in Toronto and Mississauga with space for central meetings and events; 20 fully-staffed regional offices; and 5 membership centres;**
- **More than 300 staff, including specialists in organizing, campaigning, bargaining, grievance-handling, pensions, benefits, health and safety, human rights, communications, education and more;**
- **A strong voice at local labour councils, larger labour bodies, and the broader labour movement.**

To pay for all of this, OPSEU/SEFPO members pay union dues at the rate of 1.375% of gross pay. Our union has a budget of approximately \$140 million per year, and a very healthy strike fund to support OPSEU/SEFPO members who are fighting to improve and defend their collective agreement.

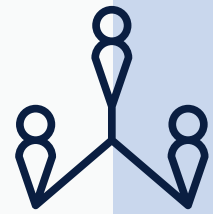
There are no initiation fees, dues are tax deductible and you do not pay any union dues until you have bargained your first collective agreement.



HOW WE WORK TOGETHER



# How OPSEU/SEFPO is structured



Everyone in OPSEU/SEFPO belongs to a local, and that is the first point of contact for members in the union. OPSEU/SEFPO has more than 500 locals across the province.

OPSEU/SEFPO has seven regions, which support their locals by geographic areas. Each region elects three Regional Executive Board Members to represent their region on the OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board.

OPSEU/SEFPO has nine Committees and Caucuses, which represent members from equity-deserving groups. Members from seven of these equity-deserving groups elect one Equity Executive Board Member to represent their equity group on the OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board.

OPSEU/SEFPO workers are also grouped into divisions and sectors, based on the type of work they do. Sectors allow locals to work together on issues of concern in their sector, and to coordinate their activities across the province.

This model of governance balances local autonomy and equity representation with strong regional and central co-ordination.

The governance structures of our union, along with its policies and procedures, are laid out in the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution, Policy Manual and Procedures Manual.

**HOW OPSEU SEFPO IS STRUCTURED**



# Building union power in your workplace



**What are the problems in your workplace that you and your coworkers cannot tolerate any longer? If you are like most public sector workers, your workload is extraordinary and increasing, and your wages do not keep up with the cost of living. We can face those struggles together**

## Your collective agreement: The most powerful tool in your workplace

Being an OPSEU/SEFPO member gives you access to the most powerful tool workers have to improve the conditions in your workplace – collective bargaining. You can force your employer to listen to you and your co-workers and negotiate mutually agreeable solutions.

Together, you and your coworkers bargain a contract with your employer that has all the terms and conditions of your employment in it, like your wages and benefits, hours of work, health and safety arrangements, equity provisions, vacation time, and much more. That contract is called a collective agreement.

The group of workers covered by the collective agreement in your workplace is your bargaining unit. This is the group that must all participate together in workplace actions to win. The more coworkers who participate in actions to solve workplace problems, the stronger you are to win your demands.

**Action:** Look for OPSEU/SEFPO's most recent campaigns on the website, social media, and OPSEU/SEFPO This Week email and sign on to them.

Share the campaign information with a coworker and tell them why you think it is important that we support each other's campaigns. Ask them to sign on too!



**BUILDING UNION POWER**

# OPSEU/SEFPO Locals



Our union local is the basic structure in OPSEU/SEFPO that connects workers together in the workplace and connects all of us to the rest of the union. Our union is committed to developing healthy, active, and functional locals that include all members in the decision-making process by removing barriers to participation- and, more specifically, to removing barriers faced by Indigenous, Black and racialized members. We are stronger when our union, our workplaces and our province are more equitable places that work for everyone.

There are several types of locals:

- **Single unit local** - where all members in the local work for the same employer, in the same location, with one collective agreement.
- **Multi-unit local** - where all members in the local work for the same employer, at different locations, with one collective agreement.
- **Composite local** - where members in the local work for more than one employer, in different locations, under more than one collective agreement.

Your union local is where you and your co-workers will:

- Decide on the issues you will pursue in bargaining with your employer(s), and how you want to bargain.
- Work through your local to enforce the gains in your collective agreement through filing grievances or taking direct workplace action.
- Decide what committees you need in your workplace to resolve local issues, and which of you will participate in them.
- Create a safe and healthy workplace by knowing your legal rights and enforcing them.
- Find allies for your issues in other workplaces, unions and community groups, and work with them to create a strategy to win.



BUILDING UNION POWER

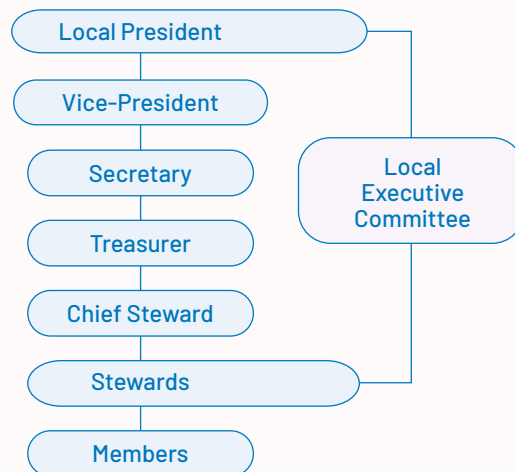
# Elected leaders in your local



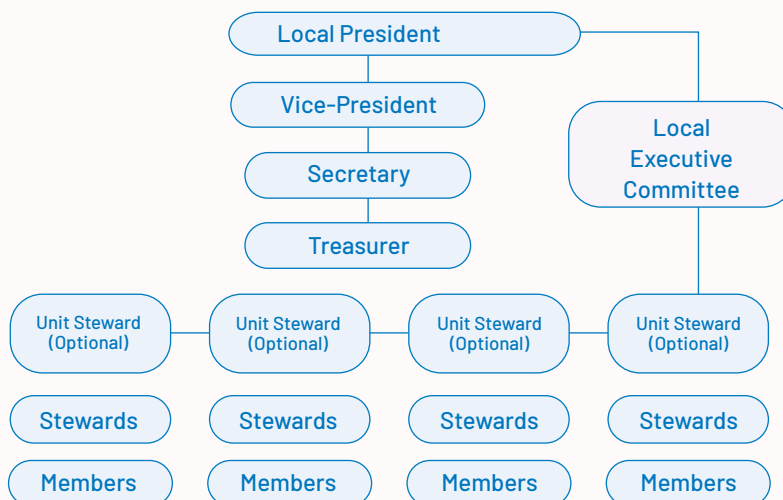
Shop stewards take primary responsibility for representing members in their areas of the workplace. Any member in the local can be a steward, but the stewards should reflect the diversity of the workplace. There is training available to learn the essentials of being a steward.

The Local Executive Committee is elected by you and your co-workers from amongst the stewards and includes a local president and at least two other officers (e.g., vice-president, secretary, treasurer, chief steward, unit stewards, etc.). This group of leaders is responsible for ensuring your local meets all its obligations to the local's membership and the broader OPSEU/SEFPO community of members.

## Single-unit local



## Multi-unit or composite local



# Organizing for power



**OPSEU/SEFPO is an organizing union.** To build the power necessary to win great contracts, better working conditions and strong communities, we make it our goal to get a supermajority of members to participate in workplace actions – whether it’s wearing a sticker, signing a petition, voting “yes” in a strike vote, or showing up for events, actions or strikes.

**What’s a supermajority?** It’s not just a simple majority of members who show up. We can’t win if only a handful of union members get involved on behalf of everyone in the union. We win when a very high percentage of ALL union members participate in the union and agree to take action together.

**Every workplace has natural leaders–** people who are trusted and influential amongst their colleagues – and those leaders aren’t necessarily involved in the union. At least, not yet. When natural workplace leaders do get involved in the union, they help build the supermajorities we need to win!

## Get involved in your local!

**There are so many ways to be involved in our union.** You don’t have to run for election to be involved – and not all leaders in the workplace are elected! Here’s a checklist to help you get started:

- ⚡ Find out what local you belong to in the OPSEU/SEFPO Member Portal.
- ⚡ Ask your steward to direct you to your local’s website, social media, and newsletters.
- ⚡ Plan to attend your next local membership meeting – ask your steward or local president when it’s happening.
- ⚡ Invite a co-worker to the next union meeting or event.
- ⚡ Ask your steward for a full list of elected positions in your local and other labour bodies you’re a part of, and when the next elections are taking place so you can participate and vote.
- ⚡ Ask your local about upcoming educational opportunities that you can attend. Some are run by your local, and others take place at OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Educational events.
- ⚡ Your local elects delegates to attend OPSEU/SEFPO meetings and our annual Convention, where collective decisions are made. Ask your steward or local president for a list of delegated events and the date and process for electing delegates so you can participate and vote.
- ⚡ Your local may submit resolutions to Convention or other OPSEU/SEFPO meetings. Resolutions direct the union on policy, procedures and actions, and are voted on by the delegates at those meetings. Talk to your fellow local members about resolutions you want to bring forward about shared issues of concern.
- ⚡ Form a committee with fellow OPSEU/SEFPO members to bring issues of concern forward to the union and work together to resolve them.
- ⚡ Participate in bargaining by submitting your demands, taking part in bargaining actions or events, and voting “yes” if your bargaining team calls a strike vote.
- ⚡ Run for election at the local, regional or provincial levels of OPSEU/SEFPO!

ORGANIZING FOR POWER



# Grievances and collective action: Using union power to resolve workplace issues



You may have picked up this guide because something unfair has happened to you (or a co-worker) in your workplace, and you want to do something about it, or to address a concern in your workplace.

You may have picked up this guide because something unfair has happened to you (or a co-worker) in your workplace, and you want to do something about it, or to address a concern in your workplace.

Your collective agreement contains the rights you have in the workplace. It also lays out the process for seeking redress when those rights have been violated. Talk to your steward about the problem you are experiencing – they can help you decide whether filing a grievance using this procedure is best. They may bring in union staff, such as a staff or pay equity representative, grievance officer, equity officer, or health and safety officer to assist.

You should also talk to your co-workers about the problem, because they may be having the same problem. If it is widespread, then your local could organize a workplace campaign to get your employer to agree to the changes you need. OPSEU/SEFPO staff can help your local make a plan to build the majority support for participation in direct action you and your co-workers will need to win on the issue.



ORGANIZING FOR POWER



# Organizing to win at bargaining



## ORGANIZING FOR POWER

Workers collectively bargain to win contracts (also known as collective agreements) that make real improvements in our lives and our workplaces. Your collective agreement has an expiry date and a process for negotiating a new one with your employer.

Some of us in OPSEU/SEFPO bargain in small bargaining units with just the members of our own workplace. Others of us belong to central, sector-wide bargaining units which span many locals and sometimes many employers and workplaces.

Our goal as union members is to make gains every time we bargain a new contract – and your employer’s goal in bargaining is usually to ask for concessions from you and your co-workers. In order to win gains at the bargaining table, we must build power through high participation in actions that show the employer that we are united behind our demands.

Effective bargaining requires advance planning and strategy that includes everyone in the local – or in the case of sector-wide central bargaining, everyone in the sector.

First, we work together to identify key issues of concern – this is how we set our bargaining goals.

Then your bargaining unit plans the actions you will take together to demonstrate your resolve, and how you will get everyone to participate, because that is what it takes to win.

You and your co-workers will decide on how you want to bring these issues to the bargaining table with your employer – who among you will sit on the bargaining team, and how the other members can participate in the bargaining process.

You will make a plan for how you will communicate with each other while bargaining is under way, and together you will decide when and how to escalate your actions if your employer is not meeting your demands.

You are essential to the success of the bargaining plan, and you can take steps today to be ready to bargain.

**Action:** Find out when your collective agreement expires. Watch for information from your unit/local on when the bargaining campaign is going to begin.

**Action:** Participate in bargaining campaign planning. Talk to your co-workers about the changes you want to see in your contract. Go to meetings and share your ideas.

**Action:** Participate in every action planned to demonstrate your resolve to the employer. Bring your co-workers to those actions!

**Action:** Ask your steward about upcoming educational opportunities for you to learn more about how collective bargaining works.

**Action:** Become a mobilizer to get other co-workers involved in bargaining actions. Run to be on the bargaining team.

**Action:** Join an organizing committee in your unit/local or start one with fellow co-workers to address shared concerns.



# OPSEU/SEFPO Regions

**OPSEU/SEFPO is divided into seven geographical regions, and there are several regional offices and stand-alone membership centres across each region to service the locals in their area. These are the cities in each region with regional offices and stand-alone membership centres:**

## Region 1:

- London (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Windsor (Regional Office and Membership Centre)

## Region 2:

- Guelph (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Hamilton (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Milton (Membership Centre)
- Niagara (Regional Office and Membership Centre – Jim Tait Membership Room)
- Owen Sound (Regional Office and Membership Centre)

## Region 3:

- Bracebridge (Regional Office | Membership Centre)
- Midland (Membership Centre)
- Orillia (Regional Office | Membership Centre)
- Oshawa (Regional Office | Membership Centre)
- Peterborough (Regional Office | Membership Centre)

## Region 4:

- Belleville (Membership Centre)
- Brockville (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Cornwall (Membership Centre)
- Kingston (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Ottawa (Regional Office and Membership Centre)

## Region 5:

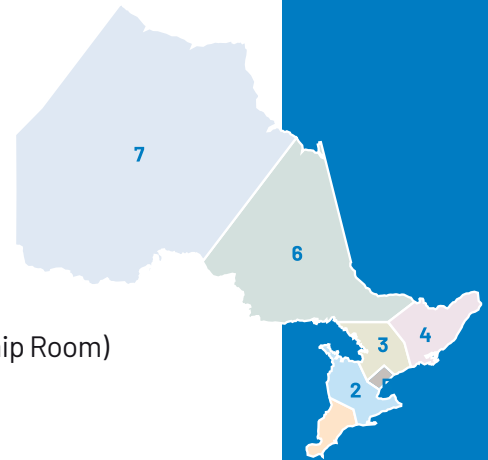
- Toronto (2 Regional Offices and 2 Membership Centres)

## Region 6:

- North Bay (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Sault Ste. Marie (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Sudbury (Regional Office and Membership Centre)
- Timmins (Regional Office and Membership Centre)

## Region 7:

- Dryden (Regional Office)
- Fort Frances (Membership Centre)
- Kenora (Membership Centre)
- Thunder Bay (Regional Office and Membership Centre)



**OPSEU SEFPO REGIONS**

## Contact your Regional Office:

- Have questions? Need to contact your local president or staff representative?
- Contact your nearest OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Office – scan the QR code for a list of offices, or call OPSEU/SEFPO's main number: 1-800-268-73766.



# OPSEU/SEFPO Divisions and Sectors



All of the work done by us as OPSEU/SEFPO members is grouped into divisions and sectors to make it easy for us to find other workers to organize with who share the same issues. Your local is part of one of these collectives.

There are three main divisions in OPSEU/SEFPO:

- **Ontario Public Service (OPS):** includes all members who work for ministries of the Government of Ontario. OPS members are grouped into the Correctional Bargaining Unit and the Unified Bargaining Unit, and by the ministry for which they work.
- **Colleges:** includes all members who work as faculty and support staff for Ontario's colleges.
- **Broader Public Sector (BPS):** includes members who work in all other sectors. BPS members are grouped by occupations into divisional councils and sectors.

Some of the problems you experience in your workplace are not unique. They are shared by others who do the same work or provide the same service as you elsewhere. For example, when the provincial government underfunds the work you do, the result is deteriorating employment conditions for workers and diminished quality and access to public services everywhere in Ontario.

When faced with broader issues such as these, we must work with more workers than just those in our own workplace to solve these problems. And when we know that the root problem is caused by government, our plan to win must go beyond negotiating with our employer. We must take political action as well and involve everyone who is affected by the issue.

Your sector or division is where you and other OPSEU/SEFPO members will:

- Decide on the problems or issues you will organize to win on, and build the plan
- Work together on what priorities you will pursue in bargaining, and how the sector will bargain to win
- Build a strategy to organize workers and the community to move government on your priorities
- Make a plan to bring more workers into the sector to build the power you need to win

Just like in your local, the members in the sector elect leaders who are responsible for ensuring your sector or division meets its responsibilities to the sector members, to the broader OPSEU/SEFPO membership and the community.

There are many actions you can take to build power and win in your sector or division. Here are a few to get started:

**Action:** Find out which division or sector your local is part of at [opseu.org/sectors](http://opseu.org/sectors).

**Action:** Connect with your division or sector via social media or the OPSEU/SEFPO website. Ask your steward or local president for help finding the information or signing up to stay informed.

**Action:** Your division or sector holds meetings where representatives from across the province plan ways to win your priorities. Ask your steward or local president how you can contribute.

## DIVISIONS AND SECTORS

## Divisions and Sectors of OPSEU/SEFPO



# DIVISIONS AND SECTORS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>OPS (Ontario Public Service)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ontario Public Service (Unified)</li> <li>Ontario Public Service (Corrections)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blood Services and Diagnostics (BPS Sector 19)</li> <li><b>Health Care Divisional Council</b> (Includes BPS Sectors 1, 8, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19)</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Colleges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colleges (Faculty)</li> <li>Colleges (Faculty Full-time)</li> <li>Colleges (Support Full-Time)</li> <li>Colleges (Support Part-Time)</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>BPS (Broader Public Service)</b><br/>LCBO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liquor Board Employees (BPS Sector 26)</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Social Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developmental Services (BPS Sector 2)</li> <li>Children's Aid Societies (BPS Sector 4)</li> <li>Community Agencies (BPS Sector 5)</li> <li>BPS Corrections (BPS Sector 7)</li> <li>Child Treatment Centres (BPS Sector 15)</li> <li><b>Community Services Divisional Council</b> (Includes BPS Sectors 2, 4, 5, 7, 15)</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boards of Education and Cultural Institutions (BPS Sector 3)</li> <li>Universities (BPS Sector 9)</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>Health care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambulance (BPS Sector 1)</li> <li>Long-Term Care (BPS Sector 8)</li> <li>Hospital Professionals (BPS Sector 10)</li> <li>Hospital Support (BPS Sector 11)</li> <li>Community Health Care Professionals (BPS Sector 17)</li> <li>Mental Health and Addictions (BPS Sector 18)</li> </ul> | <p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipalities (BPS Sector 13)</li> <li>Private Contractors (Sector 14)</li> <li>Property Assessment (BPS Sector 16)</li> <li>General (Sector 20)</li> </ul>  |
|  | <p><b>Occupational division</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) - Occupational Division</li> </ul>   |

## BPS Divisional Councils

In two areas of OPSEU/SEFPO – health care and community services – several Broader Public Service (BPS) sectors and divisions are grouped together to work as divisional councils.

The Health Care Divisional Council encompasses members working in the following sectors: ambulance, hospital professionals, hospital support, long-term care, community health care professionals, mental health and addictions, and blood services and diagnostics.

The Community Services Divisional Council encompasses members working in developmental services, children's aid, community agencies, BPS youth corrections, and child treatment centres. Their mandate is to work on issues that are common to their individual sectors, including:

- Coordinating activities of member divisions
- Developing policies that affect members across divisions
- Monitoring trends and issues across divisions
- Developing proposals for the OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board
- Communicating on a wider scale.

# Equity Groups: Building an inclusive union culture

We must actively work to remove barriers to participation so every member, including marginalized, precariously-employed and low income workers can become a leader at any level of the union. It means, for example, actively working to advance equity and dismantle systemic racism at every level of OPSEU/SEFPO.

When workers collectively demand change from our employer or our government, we have the power to win. But the forces aligned against us are great, and it takes all of us to succeed. Our union cannot leave anyone behind and meet our collective goals. True solidarity means every member has a home in our union.

OPSEU/SEFPO members also have lives outside of work, and participate in communities beyond our union. In all these spaces, we expect and deserve equity, respect and representation.

## Equity Committees and Caucus

OPSEU/SEFPO has nine Committees and Caucuses, which represent members from equity-deserving groups. Members from seven of these equity-deserving groups elect one Equity Executive Board Member to represent their equity group on the OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board.

### Equity Committees

- **Indigenous Circle (IC)**
- **Coalition of Racialized Workers (CoRW)**
- **Provincial Women’s Committee (PWC)**
- **Provincial Young Worker’s Committee (PYC)**
- **Provincial Francophone Committee (PFC)**
- **Rainbow Alliance arc-en-ciel (RAA)**
- **Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRC)**



### Equity Caucuses

- **Disability Rights Caucus (DRC)**
- **Jewish Caucus**



# EQUITY GROUPS

**Action:** Each committee and caucus is responsible for its own plan of action to advance equity. You can learn more and participate on each committee’s website.

**Action:** Committee and caucus members are either elected at regional meetings biannually, or selected by application process. Ask your steward or local president when the next regional meeting is, and how to apply or run for election for a committee or caucus.

# Union democracy



OPSEU/SEFPO's mission is to build public service worker power to advance social and economic justice for all workers. Our strength is in our members, rooted in solidarity with each other, the labour movement, and our communities.

Turning this mission into a plan and a structure is a big responsibility. It requires us to make many important decisions, such as how much resources we will collectively provide through our dues, and how we can most effectively use those dues to create an organization, operations, opportunities and initiatives that will meet our collective goals.

That responsibility belongs first and foremost to the membership as a whole. As a democratic union, the collective voice of the members must determine how we will build power and participate in our union.

## Convention: The ultimate decision-maker

The ultimate decision-making authority in our union are the delegates from every local who attend our annual OPSEU/SEFPO Convention. Through your local, you will participate in selecting which members will represent you at Convention. On your behalf, the delegates collectively consider the resolutions put forward by the membership to guide the union's action for the upcoming year, pass a budget to direct our resources to our goals, and consider constitutional changes needed to build a more effective union.



UNION DEMOCRACY



## The OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board

Every two years at regional meetings held a few weeks before Convention, we elect an Executive Board of three members from each of OPSEU/SEFPO's seven regions, and one member from each of OPSEU/SEFPO's seven designated equity groups.

This **28-member Executive Board** is responsible for making decisions that implement the resolutions passed by the members at Convention. They also govern our union between Conventions in the best interests of the membership as a whole, following our constitution, policies and procedures.

Every second convention, we elect the President and First Vice President/ Treasurer of the union from among those 28 Executive Board Members-elect.

One board member from each region is elected by delegates to be their Regional Vice-President, and one equity board member is elected to be the Equity Vice-President.

Some of our union's dues are provided to the seven regions, and the Executive Board Members from the region will be responsible for determining the education, programs, initiatives and campaigns that meet the region's members' needs.

When we decide to engage in province-wide campaigns to use our collective power to move the government, organizing for high participation by the region's members is the responsibility of the board members.

More about OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board Equity Seats

## More about OPSEU/SEFPO Executive Board Equity Seats

Ensuring that the Executive Board of the union reflects the full diversity of the membership is a critical step on the path to our union becoming more equitable and inclusive.

At the 2023 Convention, delegates voted to increase the number of board seats to include greater representation of members from equity groups in our union.

In 2024, 14 Board Equity positions were filled – one board member and one alternate to represent members from the seven equity-deserving groups with an established OPSEU/SEFPO equity committee or caucus.

You can participate in this process if you self-identify as a member of one or more of these groups and have signed your membership card.

You can stand as a candidate for the seat, or you can participate in the election of the board member.

We encourage every one of our members to run for these positions and all leadership positions – in your local, sector and region! You won't be alone – there's training, mentorship and support available.

You can find all the information you need at [opseu.org/equityseats](https://opseu.org/equityseats).

UNION DEMOCRACY

# Organizing in your community and the broader labour movement



OPSEU/SEFPO members are not just connected through our workplaces. We are interconnected through the communities in which we live, and the concerns we share not just with each other, but other workers and neighbours too. Many of the issues we face as workers or citizens also require strong majorities taking bargaining or political action in order to win.

Through OPSEU/SEFPO you are part of broader organizations formed by workers to win on our shared issues beyond our workplaces.

## OPSEU/SEFPO Area Councils

Within OPSEU/SEFPO, locals have formed area councils at the local community level. Area councils can build worker power to push for improvements to municipal services, to target provincial or federal representatives through the ridings in which workers live, or support OPSEU/SEFPO locals engaged in bargaining campaigns. They organize members for participation in our union's province-wide campaigns or events.

## Regional Labour Councils

Your local may belong to a labour council, which includes the locals of all the other unions that represent workers in your city or region. Labour councils share many of the goals of area councils, but build power by organizing workers to win across many unions.

## Solidarity across the province, country, and world

- **The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)** brings together the unions in Ontario to fight for safe, just, inclusive working and living conditions for all people, whether union members or not.
- **The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)** is the national voice of provincial public service unions across Canada.
- **The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)** is the voice for all Canadian workers; they build worker-based plans to create and protect good, sustainable jobs and communities for all of us.
- **Public Services International (PSI)** is our global public services workers union and brings unions together from 148 countries. They are the international voice for public services and the workers and unions which deliver them.

OPSEU/SEFPO is affiliated to all of these labour organizations – directly with the OFL at the provincial level, and with the CLC and PSI through our national union, NUPGE.

ORGANIZING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**ORGANIZE.**  
**FIGHT.**  
**WIN.**



 **OPSEU  
SEFPO**