



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
YOUNG WORKERS' ISSUES—  
COVID-19**

**VIDEOCONFERENCE**

June 26, 2020

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is a family of 11 Component and 3 affiliate unions. Taken together, we are one of the largest unions in Canada. Most of our 390,000 members work to deliver public services of every kind to the citizens of their home provinces. We also have a large and growing number of members who work for private businesses.

Larry Brown, President

Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer

**Advisory Committee on Young Workers' Issues**  
**—COVID-19**  
**Videoconference**  
**June 26, 2020**  
**12:00 p.m. (EDT)**

## **PARTICIPANTS**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>HSABC/NUPGE</b> | Bobby Chavarie   |
| <b>HSAA/NUPGE</b>  | Seanna Fakeley   |
| <b>SGEU/NUPGE</b>  | Mark Wells   |
| <b>MGEU/NUPGE</b>  | Kimberly Ross  |
| <b>NSGEU/NUPGE</b> | Nicole Turple  |
| <b>NAPE/NUPGE</b>  | Kristal Rice   |
| <b>NUPGE</b>       | Larry Brown, President<br>Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer<br>Len Bush, Managing Director (Office of the President)<br>Jeryn Daly, National Representative<br>Sandra Megeney, Administrative Representative |

## 1. Welcome and Introductions—Jeryn Daly

Participants from 6 Components and 5 NUPGE staff joined the videoconference.

Jeryn Daly began the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for joining the videoconference. Daly read a land acknowledgement, recognizing that, although the meeting took place virtually, the National Union building is on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg, and is now home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

## 2. Officers' Greetings—Larry Brown, President, and Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer

Larry Brown and Bert Blundon provided opening remarks.

Brown stressed the importance of remembering that we haven't made it through the worst of the first wave of COVID-19. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) continues to be an issue. It's misleading to think that things can go back to normal just because businesses are reopening.

Brown also gave an overview of what issues NUPGE is currently working on:

- bringing long-term care under the *Canada Health Act*,
- combating austerity in post-COVID economic recovery,
- establishing 2 new special committees (anti-racism and child care), and
- researching potential changes in the nature of work.

Regarding changes in the nature of work, Brown highlighted an example in the US, where nurses are warning they're being pushed towards a telehealth model instead of having face-to-face contact with patients.

Brown closed by warning that if we enter a serious recession, it's going to significantly impact young workers coming out of high school and post-secondary school. Additionally, most collective agreements don't include protections for working from home. And workers' compensation systems aren't equipped to protect workers working from home. Should the trend of working from home continue (and most governments in Canada have signaled that they're in no rush to get workers back in the office), serious work needs to be done in regard to collective bargaining and advocating for changes to workers' compensation systems.

Blundon elaborated more on the Special Anti-racism Committee, saying young people seem to be doing a lot of the heavy lifting on anti-racism. He noted that this is a radicalizing moment where a lot of young people are becoming activists for the first time.

Blundon also noted that climate change is another major issue for young workers. He said older generations were happy to see young people stepping up to the issue. He closed by reminding participants not to underestimate their role as young people in society, and to be vigilant against the right wing, who want to drag us backwards instead of making progress.

Both officers thanked the committee for all the important work they do.

### **3. Review of Agenda**

Daly stated that the purpose of the meeting was to check in with participants, acknowledging that things had changed since the initial meeting in March. Participants were asked to give a brief overview of the COVID situation in their province, and tell whether their union had done any work specifically related to young workers during the pandemic.

### **4. Cross-Country Reports**

#### **NAPE/NUPGE—Kristal Rice**

NAPE lobbied for child care during COVID-19, and got the government to cover up to \$200 per week per child: this could be paid to a relative or to anyone. Gas prices went down in the province, but everything else went up in price, particularly groceries.

PPE shortages were a big issue for the province. PPE leftover from the H1N1 outbreak was stored instead of being added to rotation, so it expired prior to COVID-19. Workers employed in group homes and home care had a really hard time accessing PPE. NAPE is still working on that issue.

The Young Workers' conference that was scheduled for fall 2020 is now postponed until fall 2021.

NAPE's collective agreement does not have a work-from-home policy. But in the health care agreement, there is a policy that allowed workers to take home whatever they need from the office in order to work.

#### **NSGEU/NUPGE—Nicole Turple**

The state of emergency is still in effect in Nova Scotia. The province has different phases in their plan to reopen. Most workers in the civil service worked from home when applicable. Others continued working as normal, but with social distancing.

The government didn't listen to the recommendations from the NSGEU or health experts, which led to problems in long-term care. The Northwood Manor facility had major issues and the majority of deaths in the province. Workers were forced to work in these COVID-positive facilities without proper PPE, and some contracted COVID.

The government announced in March that some workers were eligible to receive a \$2,000 bonus. No one has received it as of yet.

The NSGEU didn't do anything specifically related to young workers during the pandemic, but they did hold town hall calls that allowed young workers to communicate directly with the president and other elected officials.

Child care was another issue. Daycares are now open, but there are still restrictions in place. This issue needs to be discussed before the next wave of COVID.

A meeting via Zoom has been scheduled for the Young Workers' Committee.

### **HSABC/NUPGE—Bobby Chavarie**

HSABC redeployed a number of reps and staff members to work for a COVID-19 response hotline, which was open 7 days a week. As a result, the Young Workers' Advisory Group was put on hold.

When the government announced a pandemic pay for wage top-up, it applied only to nurses. HSABC negotiated for their members to receive the same pandemic pay.

HSABC's Young Workers' Advisory Group has 6 members. The Board of Directors recently approved the Terms of Reference for the committee. Meetings have resumed, and the group is starting to explore member outreach and work on the young workers' forum. The committee has also been thinking about how to be more actively engaged in anti-racism work. The Canadian Labour Congress has produced good resources on the topic, including podcasts, videos, and literature.

HSABC completed an anti-racism survey with their members this past winter. They're still compiling the survey results and will use the findings to help make HSABC actively anti-racist.

Other issues HSABC is working on are occupational health and safety and PPE.

The Young Workers' Committee has been using Slack as a business communication platform.

### **MGEU/NUPGE—Kimberly Ross**

Most members are working from home, and there have been some layoffs.

Manitoba hasn't been hit hard by COVID-19, as the government took a lot of preventative measures. The MGEU has been very supportive of all of their members. They send out a weekly update to all members from the MGEU President, Michelle Gawronsky.

Committee meetings have just restarted as of this week. The MGEU Young Workers' Committee has a Facebook group where they can work collaboratively.

A recent victory for the MGEU was that Bill 28—which prevented collective bargaining to occur freely—was ruled unconstitutional.

### **SGEU/NUPGE—Mark Wells**

SGEU hasn't done anything specifically focused on COVID related to Young Workers.

Most members are working from home. SGEU closed both of their regional offices. A limited number of staff continued to work in the Regina head office, but the office is closed to general public access.

Internet connectivity was a problem for rural workers, and several members experienced problems trying to work from home.

All meetings were canceled. The annual convention was postponed until next year, though they may still have an online convention to facilitate voting. They don't expect they'll be able to create a young workers' committee or hold a young workers' forum this year.

### **HSAA/NUPGE—Seanna Fakeley**

The Young Workers' Committee was put on hold at the start of the pandemic and will be restarted in the fall.

HSAA put together a virtual report in lieu of holding a convention. The report included videos and PDF reports.

Alberta had no problems with PPE shortages and actually shared PPE with other provinces. There is a fear among members of PPE shortages should there be a second wave.

Issues of redeployment and O.T. hours are something the union has to look at collectively moving forward. Workers were told redeployment was voluntary, but weren't given a choice in the matter.

Pre-COVID, HSAA worked on a set of 4 videos that talk directly about issues young workers may be interested in. One is already shared on Instagram @hsayoungworkers. They are hoping to have a campaign to share all the videos next year. They were also hoping to promote the Instagram account at convention.

HSAA members receive monthly newsletters, as well as updates from Mike Parker, HSAA President.

## **5. Questions and Wrap-Up**

The HSAA Young Workers' Committee received an email from John Hindle, an LRO from HSABC, asking whether they had any specific training for young workers. Daly responded that NUPGE didn't have anything on that topic and mentioned SGEU's

Young Workers' Forum. Wells, of SGEU, stated that most of the sessions focused on general activism.

Wells asked about the committee's age limit, as he'll be over the age limit by the fall meeting. Daly responded that she'll inquire with management before the next meeting.

Daly stated that the next meeting will be sometime in the fall and will be longer than 90 minutes. Participants will be polled about a variety of potential meeting dates. NUPGE is still testing long-format meetings on Zoom.

Daly reiterated the reminder for participants who hadn't yet sent in their reports to [jdaly@nupge.ca](mailto:jdaly@nupge.ca) to be included in the meeting report. She thanked everyone for attending and ended the videoconference.

### Follow-ups

| Task  | Responsibility | Completed |
|---|----------------|-----------|
| Send any relevant documents to Jeryn ( <a href="mailto:jdaly@nupge.ca">jdaly@nupge.ca</a> ) | Participants   |           |
| Compile notes and other materials, then circulate   | NUPGE          |           |



## APPENDIX

### Component Reports

#### HSABC/NUPGE

**Number of Members:** 18, 000

**Approximate number or percentage of young workers:** 25%

**Does your Component have a young workers committee?** No, we do not have committee status but we do receive funding and support for a “Young Workers Advisory Group” which just had its Terms of Reference approved by the HSA Board of Directors.

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board?** No

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#### 1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?

BCNDP – Pro Healthcare but trying to do lots, concerned about pressures for private with longer waitlists impacted by the Pandemic.

#### 2) Briefly describe your government’s response to COVID-19:

The BC NDP Government has relied on science based decision making and taken a measured approach to starting things up again. They have been successful in flattening the curve.

#### 3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?

Nothing young worker specific. We were successful in getting pandemic (otherwise known as danger) pay for front line workers.

#### 4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**
- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**

- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**
- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables
- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? **0**
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) **0**

**In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.**

Anti-racism work is now one of the top priorities for our Young Workers Advisory Group whom have been discussing the intersectionality of issues faced by both young and racialized workers. Better understanding of what defunding the police could look like and what alternatives the union movement could help advocate for.

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

Campaign development materials for young worker outreach.

**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

So far we have been utilizing telephone town halls and list serve email. There has been talk about doing some phone bank nights. There have been some concerns raised around videoconferencing fatigue but continue to utilize video chat for smaller working groups.

## **HSAANUPGE**

**Number of Members:** 26,000

### **Approximate number or percentage of young workers:**

4000 members that are young workers. 70% F, 18%, 12% unreported. Lab assistants and health info are in top professions.

Top YW demographics:

3670 Edmonton

2847 Calgary

319 Red Deer

307 Sherwood Park

297 Lethbridge

246 Medicine Hat

215 Grande Prairie

**Does your Component have a young workers committee?** Yes.

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board?**  
No.

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### **1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?**

Currently, the United Conservative party is in power in Alberta. Because the NDP was preciously in power and had introduced a lot of bills that the UCP does not agree with, there is a lot of tension, especially in our current economic climate during COVID.

### **2) Briefly describe your government's response to COVID-19:**

March 5<sup>th</sup> – First case in Calgary

March 12<sup>th</sup> – Calgary enacted municipal emergency management plan

March 15<sup>th</sup> – Dr. Hinshaw (Chief medical officer) announces closure of all schools and daycares

March 17<sup>th</sup> – Most public places shut down, such as bars and restaurants and gyms.

March 18<sup>th</sup> – Jason Kenney announces Albertans in self-isolation not receiving EI will receive a cash payment of \$1146 for two weeks, meant to bridge the gap until federal payments become available.

March 20<sup>th</sup> – City of Edmonton declares a state of emergency.

March 23 – Testing was made widely available to high risk populations such as front line workers and the elderly.

March 26<sup>th</sup> – The government orders all non-essential businesses to close. Jason Kenney also introduced a ban on evicting renters over inability to pay rent & rent freezes until May.

April 30<sup>th</sup> – Jason Kenney announced a plan to loosen some restrictions and relaunch part of the economy.

Jason Kenney announced that the government expects Alberta's unemployment rate to reach up to 25%. In May 2020, it was reported at 15.5%.

Confirmed cases in Alberta are 7,851. Deaths are 154, and the government completed 415,716 tests.

### **3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?**

Not young workers but – getting hand sanitizer out for people's personal use, supported the work from home operationally, board and committee meetings have been virtual, HSAA supported OH&S and helped to find materials when needed. Suspended any community projects, convention, etc. Instead they put out a virtual convention. Kept the processes going, still chose committee members for next year.

### **4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:**

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**
- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**
- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**

- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables
- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? **0**
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) **0**

**In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.**

I think it would be interesting to see some research on activism and how young workers, especially union member young workers, are becoming involved in activism, such as the recent protests.

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

I think there is going to be a shift in the way that people work (ie, working from home, etc). Therefore, looking into agreements to address working from home etc.

Also, the issues of individuals who are coming out of post-secondary are going to be facing more issues than ever trying to find full-time or permanent employment.

**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

Newsletters, Facebook, Instagram and website.

## **SGEU/NUPGE**

**Number of Members:** ~20,000

**Approximate number or percentage of young workers:** Uncertain, but fairly low, probably in 20% range. It does vary seasonally with summer employees.

**Does your Component have a young workers committee?** No. There is a young workers' caucus at our Convention and we did run a young workers' conference in 2019.

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board?** No, however we have a seat for a young worker on the equity committee.

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### **1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?**

There is a fairly strong right lean to Saskatchewan politics right now with the Saskatchewan Party (conservatives) holding over three times the seats of the NDP.

### **2) Briefly describe your government's response to COVID-19:**

Has actually been surprisingly responsive and reasonable. There was a relatively effective mandated closure of most non-essential businesses fairly early in the COVID outbreak which caused fairly low overall numbers (less than 800 total cases so far). Testing on a per-capita basis in Saskatchewan has been lower than the national average (46,000 vs 66,000 per million). Initially testing focused on symptomatic people only, then was expanded to frontline workers, and now to anyone working outside their home. There has been a notably higher rate of infection in the 'far north' region of the province, an area with a higher indigenous population. This led to a travel restriction in the area that was met with very mixed reviews.

The government has produced a multi-stage re-opening plan that attempts to balance risk of infection against a desire to re-open the economy. There has however been a much stronger focus on enacting policy to the benefit of the consumer rather than the workers. And within a variety of Government workplaces a history of under-funding and lack of preparation placed workers at risk due to lack of appropriate reserves of PPE and lack of pre-plans on dealing with pandemics. For example, at the correctional centre in Saskatoon staff were having gloves rationed to the extent that managers were counting out gloves and not providing enough to allow staff to safely complete their assigned duties or even wear gloves while cleaning their workspaces. Staff were working in an office that could perhaps accommodate 2 people with physical distancing, but there were 5 staff in the room throughout the shift and more at shift change.

### **3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?**

It does not appear so. They have been taking the opportunity provided by reduced workloads to work on improving the quality of data on members (eg verifying contact information).

### **4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:**

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**
- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**
- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**
- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables
- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? **0**
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) **0**

**In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.**

-Meaningful Employment/Underemployment – perhaps investigating a guaranteed income or a job guarantee (which would likely be an easier sell politically)

-Education/Debt

- OHS / worker safety
- Climate change/climate dread
- Cost of living

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

Advocating for stronger OHS protections, stronger workers' rights / prevent 'gig economy' type work, advocate for a guaranteed income or job guarantee.

**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

There haven't been any new initiatives because of COVID, at least not that I've heard about. There has been some talk of launching apps to try to provide information to members in a more mobile friendly format, but no specific targeting of young workers. There seems to be a lot of reluctance to try any new strategies. For example, instead of hosting our annual convention online this year when we were compelled to postpone it, the decision was made to cancel it completely instead.



## **MGEU/NUPGE**

**Number of Members:**

**Approximate number or percentage of young workers:**

**Does your Component have a young workers committee? Yes**

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board? No**

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### **1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?**

This is a tough one to answer. I've been away from the news lately since Covid due to the negative media and the fear mongrels. However our preimere has made various cuts and or layoffs. Recently the Bill 28 was turned down by the court which sided with the unions to allow bargaining to be pair. Our Preimer is after 1 thing, that's to balance the budget by making cuts and privatizing more.

### **2) Briefly describe your government's response to COVID-19:**

Our government immediately took action and followed suite with other provinces, even with our lower numbers. A state of emergency was declared on March 20 to protect all Manitobans. Since then the order has been extended 3 times. At this time the Government continues to have the boarder closed. The MB government put together a crisis hotline for people who are struggling anxiety about Covid or having any mental health crisis.

### **3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?**

Not specifically- our union has focused on all it's members at this time. Although they have stood behind, recognized and supported all frontline/ essential service workers in our province.

### **4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:**

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**

- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**
- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**
- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables
- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? **0**
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) **0**

In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.

My responses wouldn't change

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

Support comes to mind. Right now were facing challenging times. I think education is important. I think right now more than ever it's important to reach out to young workers.

**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

I personally haven't seen anything at the present time. I think so much is going on that it hasn't been a discussion had. Everything essentially was placed on hold.

## **NSGEU/NUPGE**

**Number of Members:** 30,000+

**Approximate number or percentage of young workers:** ???

**Does your Component have a young workers committee?** Yes

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board?** No

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### **1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?**

The government in Nova Scotia is a Liberal Government with a history of being anti-union. The government in 2015 removed workers ability to participate in a fair collective bargaining process by enacting Bill 148 – the public services sustainability (2015) act. Bill 148 imposed a non-negotiated wage settlement as well as removed longstanding articles in the collective agreement including the “long-service award”. This Bill is being challenged by not only the NSGEU, but also by fellow Unions which are a part of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. The process is still ongoing on this issue. The current government has a history of contravening the collective bargaining process.

### **2) Briefly describe your government’s response to COVID-19:** The government of

The government of Nova Scotia declared a provincial State of Emergency on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This State of Emergency is still in effect as of today and is currently in effect until at least noon on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The government has had phases of restrictions and changes surrounding Covid-19. While cases were high, you were not allowed to visit people outside of your household, you were not allowed within 6 feet of any person outside of your household, public beaches/parks were closed, non-essential businesses shut down such as; salons, fitness centers, daycares, etc. Many workers within Civil Service switched to a work-from-home platform where applicable. As cases began to lessen, a household could “bubble” visit with one other mutually-exclusive household, and as of today, you can gather in groups of 10 with no social-distancing and up to 50 people with 6 foot social distancing being followed. Most parks/beaches/campgrounds/most non-essential businesses and daycares are now opened up with restrictions. Nova Scotia had a problem with Covid-19 cases in long-term care facilities and was not listening to Union or public health advice until after outbreaks had occurred. Staff members from other facilities were forced to work in COVID positive facilities after staff members became infected and were unable to work. The government announced in March that some health care staff in hospitals, long-term care, home care and in-home support and

emergency health services staff would be entitled to a \$2000 bonus in response to working on the front lines during the pandemic.

### **3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?**

Our Union has not specifically targeted aiding young-workers, but to aiding all members during Covid-19. The NSGEU had town-hall style calls with all the different groups within the membership which had our; President, OHS officer and applicable employee relations officers giving information regarding what the employer was doing to address the pandemic and having any members with a question the chance to ask and receive a response. The Union also lobbied for more PPE, pandemic-pay, work accommodations for medical concerns/lack of childcare during daycare closures, etc.

### **4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:**

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**
- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**
- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**
- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables

- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? 0
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) 0

**In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.**

1. Occupational Health and safety
2. Mental health
3. Education/debt
4. Rising cost of living
5. Combating stereotypes

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

I would like to see the National Union encouraging its components to actively engage their young workers and allow them to take on roles which may have usually been reserved for a more “seasoned/experienced” member. If young workers know that their feedback will be valued and that they are being taken seriously, they may be more willing to become involved. I would also like to see more social-media interaction for young workers, perhaps a NUPGE Young-Workers specific social media pages where shareables can be posted which are of interest to the younger population. These could then be used by the young-worker groups of the component Unions to try and engage our own members within our provinces.

**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

The NSGEU young worker committee (with our liaison from the Provincial Executive) had our first virtual meeting via Zoom on June 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss how to stay relevant and interactive during these difficult times. Many ideas that we had discussed earlier in the year are now on hold due to the pandemic as they involved holding meet and greet type events around the Province. Talks are still in early stages, but at the moment we plan to post “meet the committee” writeups and photos for each member of our Young Workers Committee onto our Young Workers of NSGEU Facebook page. Along with the regular questions, we are adding a question centering around how our jobs and lives have been

affected by the pandemic. We hope that this will spark conversation among the members and that we can be relatable and honest as to how this pandemic is affecting everybody and their personal and work situations differently. We will be in discussion to see if our posts can be shared onto the main NSGEU Facebook page as well as they have more followers and this would be a way to get our messages out and grow our own network.

## **NAPE/NUPGE**

**Number of Members:** 25000+

**Approximate number or percentage of young workers:**

**Does your Component have a young workers committee?** Yes

**Does your Component have a seat for young workers on the executive board?**

Not a direct assigned seat, but there a young worker on the executive board

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### **1) What is the government/political climate like in your province?**

Right now there is a Liberal Leadership race, the current Premier of the province resigned pre COVID, but will remain in place until a new one is selected. NL is not doing well fiscally, COVID had played a part in decreased oil and other lost revenues.

### **2) Briefly describe your government's response to COVID-19:**

The NL Gov declared a Public Health state of emergency in the early days of the pandemic. The Province shut down schools and business and developed a plan for reopening based on advice from the Medical Officer of Health. NL had one large cluster outbreak, but was able to gain control on the situation rather quickly. We are currently at an alert level 2 and are moving toward an Atlantic bubble in early July.

### **3) Has your union done anything specific to aid young workers during the COVID-19 crisis?**

NAPE along with other Provincial Unions joined together in partnership and developed a good neighbor agreement with the Provincial government that help protect workers, their benefits and hours of work. This affected our temp call-ins the most, as they are mostly comprised of young workers. It is a benefit and safeguard for all workers and will remain in place as long as there is a public health state of emergency in place. Staff have been able to work from home where possible, and NAPE worked hard to ensure staff that remained working had access to proper PPE.

**4) At our introductory meeting participants were asked to list their top 5 priorities to be discussed at the first full meeting. The voting breakdown is as follows:**

- Education/debt **8**
- Rising cost of living **7**
- Education on unions/labour history (letting young workers know union priorities so they see that their priorities match) **4**
- Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity **4**
- Mental health **4**
- Occupational health and safety **3**
- Combating stereotypes **2**
- Delaying marriage/children **2**
- Climate change/climate dread **2**
- Unpaid internships **2**
- What could the National Union provide that would be most beneficial when engaging young workers? **2**
  - Union 101 (digital primer)
  - Young workers' forum
  - Support for mentorship programs to connect young and mature members
  - Support for new and young members at Convention
  - Social media shareables
- What have you heard your young members and non-union friends talk about in relation to young workers' issues? **0**
- Education on Component-specific info (e.g., organizational mapping) **0**

**In light of the pandemic and the changes affecting the way we work, how would you rank your top 5 priorities now? Please feel free to write in your own responses if something is missing from the list.**

Rising cost of living  
Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity  
Combating stereotypes  
Occupational health and safety  
Mental health

**5) What support would you like to see from the National Union on young workers issues?**

Rising cost of living  
Lack of meaningful employment/underemployment/gig economy/job insecurity  
Importance of Unionism



**6) Given the length of time needed to properly develop a vaccine and the near certainty of a second wave of COVID-19, what communication strategies has your union been discussing to reach out to young workers virtually?**

Our young workers conference has been postponed until 2021. We have been updating our members through Social Media, engaging through memes, union and provincial updates.



## NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B. C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia (HSABC)
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU)
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU)
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers (CUBGW)
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees (NBU)
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU)
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE)
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE)

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of Public Services International.

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