



**INSTITUTIONAL AND
ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE
TO COVID-19 IN CANADA**

April 29, 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

Institutional and Organizational Response to COVID-19 in Canada

Common general responses:

- Monitoring and assessing the situation on an ongoing basis
- Advising staff/members to consult guidelines from public health officials
- Advising staff/members to undertake individual actions to slow the spread (e.g., hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette, stay home when sick, social distancing)

Government of Canada

- Treasury Board directed that federal public servants are allowed to work from home where possible, but the decision is ultimately up to each department/manager. Those who must be present at the worksite are asked to self-monitor for symptoms

CLC Convention

- Postponed until further notice (order of BC government)
- Officers remain until Convention takes place
- Flexibility with affiliates changing delegates, as ability to attend may change with dates
- Resolutions on hold, only new resolutions accepted will be emergency ones
- Delegate fees already paid to be held in escrow

PIPSC

- Closing offices, most employees working from home
- Postponing in-person union-related activities until June 30 and canceling any travel for union-related activities

PSAC

- Suspending mass gatherings, including strike votes, women's conference, and all regional conventions
- Advising that smaller gatherings/meetings be conducted remotely or postponed

CUPE

- Keeping offices open, reviewing events on a daily basis with 2-week decision-making window, and advising staff with mild symptoms to stay home
- Promoting preventative health measures, enhancing cleaning, advising ill visitors to refrain from offices, reducing travel, postponing or cancelling non-essential air travel

SEIU

- Cancelling all union events and non-essential meetings until further notice, conducting other meetings by teleconference where possible, limiting non-essential site visits

Unifor

- Closing offices, staff working from home, cancelling upcoming meetings, conducting risk assessment for events and travel

United Steelworkers

- Recommending that local unions postpone or cancel any meetings in the near future

Ontario Federation of Labour

- Implemented revised work plan for staff on March 16 until further notice, making arrangements for staff to work remotely in preparation for full office closure
- Postponing some events and moving others to virtual meeting

AUPE

- Postponing all union meetings and gatherings for minimum 30 days effective March 16

NUPGE Components

BCGEU

- Postponed convention until Spring 2021
- Postponing non-essential union gatherings of 10+ people and conducting essential gatherings remotely where possible until at least May 2
- Placing moratorium on all meetings of 10 or more people
- Offices have closed and staff are working from home
- COVID-19 response team is looking at all operations

HSABC

- Postponing annual convention
- Office remaining open, but staff urged to work from home
- Holding only essential meetings

HSAA

- Cancelling all meetings until the summer
- Conducting committee meetings electronically where possible
- Encouraging staff to work from home (VPN set up)
- Cancelled 2020 Convention

SGEU

- Restricting meetings, holding conference calls
- Convention has been postponed until further notice

MGEU

- Conducting meetings with members by phone, and postponing women's conference, member education courses and events, and most meetings until May 15
- All out of province travel cancelled
- Regional elections ahead of convention postponed or moved
- Increasing conference call lines and moving meetings electronically
- Closed all offices, including Resource Centre, and staff are working from home
- Convention 2020 has been postponed

OPSEU

- Closing offices, with access on approval-basis only (very few staff in office), and cleaning buildings thoroughly
- Staff working from home, equipment purchase to assist admin staff

- Postponing meetings or rescheduling as conference calls
- Upon agreement from OPSEU, province has suspended all labour relations hearings and meetings for now
- Cancelled 2020 Convention

NBU

- Postponing all non-essential member gatherings, conducting essential gatherings remotely where possible
- Closing offices to the public, staff working from home, labour relations officers working from home—one admin staff and one management staff in the office
- Temporary agreement with government to suspend labour relations issues
- Convention 2020 has been postponed. Bylaw amendments, resolutions and elections will be handled virtually

NSGEU

- Implementing more frequent cleaning, contacting external groups who use the office
- Closing office as of March 17
- Postponing all in-person meetings until June 1
- Looking to postpone all labour relations hearings

PEI UPSE

- Cancelling all meetings, educationals, and training sessions
- Only essential work being done

CUBGW

- Cancelling all meetings and face-to-face meetings with members

Other notable actions *

- Widespread closures (e.g., schools, municipal facilities, non-essential businesses)
- Restrictions on gatherings
- Long-term care facilities, hospitals, prisons restricting visitation
- Many sports leagues and concert/theatre venues have suspended their seasons

** See accompanying documents on government responses, employment-related measures, and child care arrangements*



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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