



report

**Correctional Officer
and Youth Facility
Worker
Representatives
Conference Call**

April 28, 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

**Correctional Officer and Youth Facility Worker Representatives
Conference Call
April 28, 2020
1:00 pm Eastern Time**

PARTICIPANTS

BCGEU/NUPGE

**Dean Purdy
Oliver Demuth**

SGEU/NUPGE

**Barry Nowoselsky
Glen Billingsley
Kim Picot
Verne Larsen**

MGEU/NUPGE

Chris Drosdoski

OPSEU/NUPGE

**Chris Jackel
Ryan Graham
Sandra Harper
Tom Gibson**

PEI UPSE/NUPGE

Chris Oatway

NUPGE

**Michael Temelini, National Representative
Nadia Ibrahim, National Representative**

Welcome and introductions

Michael Temelini, NUPGE National Representative, welcomed participants to the meeting. Past meeting notes and other relevant documents are shared via the meeting [webpage](#).

1. Updates from Components

What follows is a summary of the general updates from Components. Information shared in response to specific questions raised at the outset are consolidated below.

Questions from MGEU/NUPGE:

What are the protocols in place when inmates are required to wear masks?

- PEI: Inmates are not wearing masks
- Ontario: Level 1 surgical masks are provided to inmates who work in certain areas (e.g. kitchen or laundry). Prison industries are beginning to manufacture cloth masks to be issued to the inmates, but hasn't started yet (waiting for enough supply)
- Saskatchewan: In youth, new offenders come in wearing masks.
- BC: Inmates wear masks when in isolation or negative pressure cells

What are the number in terms of inmate refusals when inmates are required to?

- No knowledge of refusals among the other Components on the call

What types of masks are being issued to officers who are not working in isolation areas inside the jail? What are the specs on the masks that are issued?

- PEI: Officers are wearing surgical masks when dealing with offenders
- Ontario: Staff members receive level 1 surgical masks. Those working in isolation units are given level 2 surgical masks (disposable) with clear direction that they're given one for the day, but can be replaced if it becomes soiled or contaminated
- Saskatchewan: In youth, staff aren't required to wear masks, but can voluntarily. Those working in isolation units are provided surgical (level 1) masks. In adult, staff are provided surgical masks when required. In isolation units, they use the N95 mask. Staff are allowed to wear homemade or cloth masks with the caveat that if they are required to wear by employer, they must switch to what is provided.

- BC: Basic level 1 surgical masks. N95 masks given to officers working in isolation units or negative pressure cells when confirmed cases

Question from OPSEU/NUPGE:

OPSEU proposed that staff in isolation units wear P100 respirators (reusable canister-style mask) to protect mask supply. Have other provinces explored this option or received an answer from the employer?

- No information from other provinces
- BCGEU: APR masks may be assigned to officers in situations that require respirator style mask as they are reusable and can conserve PPE supply.

General Updates:

PEI UPSE/NUPGE

- The province is in relatively good shape
- Counts are down 50%
- Very few inmates coming into the facilities—interim release if someone is in remand
- New inmates are in isolation unit for 14 days

OPSEU/NUPGE

- Province [announced](#) that all staff members working in an institution will receive pandemic pay of \$4 per hour, and those working over 100 hours per month will receive a bonus of \$250 per month for the next 4 months.
- Outbreak at Ontario Correctional Institute (OCI) in Brampton: the dorm-style institution (which was the last one to have screening for staff entering the building) has closed and inmates moved to a different facility that is able to put them on lockdown. Of the 130 inmates, over half tested positive, and 27-30 staff tested positive. Staff were directed to self-isolate for 14 days. Several family members of those staff have contracted the virus.
- OPSEU is working on an agreement with the employer to provide options for next steps, since staff won't be returning to OCI for the duration of the pandemic.

MGEU/NUPGE

- Counts are down across the institutions

- Remand Centre in Winnipeg was the central intake for the province, but transitioning to sending youth back in youth facilities, but counts there remain extremely low
- Employer had contracted out making cloth masks for staff. One institution was making masks for inmates and they've been issued for whenever outside of cell. Incidents of inmate refusing to wear the masks
- Concerns from staff about cloth masks
- No confirmed cases within institutions and isolation counts are low, but there are concerns with masks, there have been some altercations, and tensions are high

SGEU/NUPGE

Youth:

- No confirmed cases in facilities, but some negative tests
- Some staff in Regina centre are isolating, awaiting results
- Staff are pushing to be able to isolate new inmates for 14 days before entering general population (as is being done in adult facilities), but facing challenges with the employer
- New admissions still coming, running out of space
- Concerns that province's plan to reopen will increase risk of infection in facilities

Adult:

- Saskatoon facility been announced pandemic-free and staff have returned to work

BCGEU/NUPGE

- No current cases among inmates in BC—the one case in March has cleared
- 151 inmates have been tested and cleared throughout the province

2. Next Steps

- Please send any documents that were mentioned during the call or other resources worth sharing to Michael and they will be shared via the meeting webpage.



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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