



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

April 7, 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 7, 2020
1:00 pm Eastern Time**

PARTICIPANTS

OPSEU	Chris Jackel Chad Olfield Janet Laverty Ryan Graham Michelle McLean Jonathon Guider Sandra Harper Pete Harding
BCGEU	Dean Purdy Oliver Demuth
NAPE	Frank Pittman
SGEU	Barry Nowoselsky Lori Bossaer Kim Picot Glen Billingsley Kelly Hardy Jon Urton Verne Larsen
PEI UPSE	Chris Oatway
MGEU	Chris Drosdoski
NSGEU	Rick Wiseman
NUPGE	Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer Len Bush, Managing Director Michael Temelini, National Representative Nadia Ibrahim, Research Officer

1. Welcome and Introductions

Len Bush, NUPGE Managing Director, welcomed participants to the meeting and asked them to please send participant names and emails to Deb Sonogo. He also pointed participants' attention to the documents that were shared via the meeting [webpage](#).

Bert Blundon, Secretary-Treasurer, provided introductory remarks. He spoke about a recent conference call with union leaders from 27 countries and how the discussion highlighted that countries with strong public services have fared better than those with more privatization. He spoke about the impacts on the justice system and threats of privatization.

2. Updates from Components

What follows is a summary of the general updates from Components.

OPSEU

- Active screening of all employees (at both adult and youth facilities) as of April 6. It is not happening at every institution yet (e.g., waiting on thermometers), but all have been given the green light. Employer agrees it's mandatory and there has been no push back from staff.
- Main issue right now is PPE: some individuals are allowed to wear it and others are not. This has resulted in work refusals. Who wears PPE is decided by the deputy superintendent and it varies by institution. OPSEU working to have PPE more readily available so staff can wear it when they feel they need to.
- Each institution has an intake unit.
- OPSEU is now looking at what Corrections Canada has done: e.g., mandatory masks when you enter the institution.
- Redeployment happening across Ontario public service. No movement is expected in corrections.

BCGEU

- 1 confirmed case at Okanagan Correctional Centre. Inmate tested positive a few days ago and moved to isolation unit in a health care unit. The living unit should have been locked up, but it continues to remain open. All officers being told they're not allowed to wear PPE, including OCC, so staff are frustrated.
- 3 provincial risk assessments: one on officer safety, one on isolation unit (in place since March 17-18), and one on use of force training for new recruits. Management wants to continue with this use of force training, but BCGEU is pushing back.

- BCGEU sent a letter to ADM of public service agency requesting \$5/hour danger pay. This is because the BC Nurses are getting \$5/hour danger pay, including those working in jails alongside correctional staff. BCGEU is tying it to the “me too” clause.

NAPE

Adult:

- No issues with PPE - available and being used when needed (e.g., when admitting).
- Movement of inmates has been curbed.
- Staffing has become an issue. No one has tested positive, but just in case, they’re looking at putting something in place. The ADM is looking at having sheriffs (not in the bargaining unit) move into institutions to do correctional officers’ work. NAPE is not agreeable to this unless it’s an emergency and believes there are enough personnel available (e.g., there are currently casuals that aren’t working that could be brought in).
- Isolation units have been made available.

Youth:

- Same precautions in place as adult
- Very few youth in custody right now

SGEU

Youth:

- Yesterday, first 2 presumptive cases amongst youth population in Regina. They have been removed, but it has resulted in quarantining of 2 units, raising concern among staff and youth. Staff are worried about going home to their families.
- More measures in place as of yesterday: all physical activity shut down (“anything that works up a sweat”), all facilities have outsourced fogging (2x per week) and cleaning services in some cases.
- Screening process is thorough, including nurses in facilities around the clock (wasn’t in place before). Nurses have been given test kits to conduct tests at the facilities.
- Intake unit and quarantine unit are still set up.

Adult:

- Fogging is in every facility, except Pine Grove (hired cleaning services).
- Every facility has isolation and quarantine units.
- No inmates have tested positive. Any tests so far have come back negative.
- 6 staff at Saskatoon Correctional Centre tested positive. One has come back to work. 50-something staff are self-isolating.
- No temperature checks yet. Direction from the ministry was that a manager would greet staff when they arrive and verify they have sanitized or washed their hands.

General Public Service:

- Redeployment: all staff were required to fill out a skills survey and can be redeployed anywhere, including across bargaining unit lines. It won't likely affect corrections - if anything, people might be pulled back into corrections.

PEI UPSE

- 2 staff are self-isolating due to travel, but no symptoms.
- Temperature checks aren't happening at facilities yet, but could.

MGEU

- Still using centralized intake model for everybody (via Remand Centre in Winnipeg)
- Different levels of PPE: corrections is following recommendations of Manitoba Health, which is still saying, unless you're doing medical procedures causing aerosolization, you don't need mask, face shield, etc. That means corrections staff wear gloves and surgical masks. MGEU is exploring pushing the employer to ensure they're maximizing their ventilation systems to bring in fresh air.
- Positive feedback on foggers so far. This is happening in-house (not contracting out).
- Only redeployment so far are youth counsellors being brought to Remand Centre.
- Indications that ministry will move towards active screening, but waiting on thermometers. Information from Ontario has been useful.
- There are still no positive cases in any institutions.

NSGEU

- Follow-up on Burnside case discussed last week: secured testing for several officers who were not identified by public health and NSGEU raised concern about conflicting information. All tests came back negative.
- No numbers on how many are self-isolating
- Employer has been cooperative on individual circumstances and the relationship remains positive
- Redeployment in public sector: beginning in health care, anticipating it will ramp up. Unlikely to see corrections staff redeployed
- Minimizing inflow of inmates, counts are low
- No active screening yet, but information from other provinces is helpful and can help NSGEU to leverage with the province
- Focusing right now on internal communications strategy. Lessons learned from last week: anyone who is considered close contact by public health will be contacted directly, but anyone outside of that won't hear anything. NSGEU is working with local leaders in facilitates to help figure out who else may have been impacted so that the union can keep them in the loop.

3. Next Steps

- Len will follow-up again with AUPE about interest in participating.
- Participants expressed interest in continuing weekly conference calls.
- Please send any documents that were mentioned during the call to Len 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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