

Asked and Answered



Your colleagues have asked us questions. Here are some answers. If you have any questions of your own, or would like more details, please call us at 807 700 1393.

1. *Why are we having a vote to join OPSEU now?*

The Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital and St Joseph Care Group have integrated some of their services, which triggered a representation vote. That vote is scheduled for March 1st, 2017. The timing of the vote is set by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. OPSEU would have liked to have provided you information earlier but we were given your contact information just two weeks prior to the vote.

2. *When a new job is posted in a unionized workplace, will the job go to the person with the most seniority?*

Our job posting language recognizes skill, ability, experience and relevant qualifications. Only when these are relatively equal, seniority acts as a tie-breaker.

3. *As a non-union employee, I have flexibility in our hospital. Right now, I can talk to my manager if I have to come in late, leave late, take a vacation day with short notice, etc. Will I lose this flexibility when we join OPSEU?*

When you join OPSEU, the union will support you. We are here for your benefit. Your relationship with OPSEU reinforces the beneficial terms and conditions you have with the hospital, including the flexibility, you now enjoy. OPSEU is there to improve your working life, not to detract from it.

4. *Will I lose any privileges I already enjoy when I join a union?*

After the vote, when you become an OPSEU member, your existing contract and working relationship with the hospital will remain the same. Any change to the terms or conditions of employment during a statutory freeze can only be made if the change is consistent with the employer's past management practices. Bargaining will focus on making improvements on your current working conditions. With OPSEU's support and resources, you'll have more power as an employee to negotiate gains and improvements.





5. Right now I'm a .7 FTE and the employer considers me full time with benefits. Will that continue when I join a union?

The answer is yes. If you are now considered a full time employee with benefits by your employer, you'll have the ability to enshrine that in your collective agreement. Similarly, you will be bargaining to gain, not to lose benefits or privileges, when you become a union member.

6. My classification is smaller than other groups. How do I know my voice will not get lost?

Every member's voice is heard in OPSEU. We have a wealth of experience representing over 25,000 hospital professionals across Ontario in a vast variety of classifications. You have the strength of your local in the hospital and of your colleagues across the province to advance your employment goals. You'll have a far reaching network to support and promote your voice in the workplace.

7. How much are my union dues?

Union dues are 1.375% of your gross income. They are fully tax deductible under the professional fees category. Dues are used to provide support and protection for you and your colleagues.

8. When we join OPSEU, how is seniority calculated?

Seniority will be calculated from the first day you worked at St Joseph Care, as if you were an OPSEU member that first day.

9. Will I stay in HOOPP when I join OPSEU?

Yes. In fact, OPSEU has two trustees on the board of the HOOPP pension plan to represent your interests.

10. When I join OPSEU, will I go on strike?

No. Under Hospital Labour Dispute Arbitration Act (HLDA), hospital professionals have the recourse of an arbitrator to solve outstanding disputes with management but cannot go on strike.

For more information visit www.stjoestaff.ca, or contact 1-807-700-1393.