



How OPSEU works in the OPS

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE - UNIFIED

OPSEU/SEFPO members who work for the ministries and agencies of the Ontario Public Service (OPS) provide the services that Ontarians depend on every day to keep our communities safe and improve our quality of life. We are the backbone of every public service. The province of Ontario provides the following: education; health care; social services; public safety; transportation and infrastructure; labour standards; food and water safety; consumer rights; protection of the environment and natural resources; and human rights and accessibility, to name just a few. The Unified Division of the OPS includes most of the OPSEU/SEFPO members who work for the Ontario Public Service with the exception of the Corrections Division.

Welcome to OPS Unified!

The collective agreement covers a wide variety of topics. Some of them are critically important to know and understand.

The purpose of this document is to help you navigate the important aspects of being a union member. On the first page, you'll see information pertaining to your local Stewards (also known as local reps). These Employees were elected by your peers to represent everyone in your workplace.

When questions or concerns arise regarding rights and entitlements under the collective agreement, members are encouraged to discuss these issues with their manager, a representative from Human Resources or representative from Pay and Benefits. When

in doubt, your steward or executive committee member may be able to provide clarity should you have concerns with the information you have received.

This booklet is intended to be an overview of the union and its entities. If you have any questions or need help contact your local steward for assistance.

Membership Application

Your Electronic Membership Application (EMA-Web version) can be found through this link <https://hub03.opseu.org/Forms/emaweb> and submitted.

It entitles you to member discounts on wireless services through BAKA (Bell), Via Rail tickets, Insurance, OPSEU/SEFPO Group Home & Auto Insurance, tickets to ROM, sporting events, Fallsview Waterpark, Ontario Science Center and OPSEU/SEFPO Merchandise.

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Understanding your OPSEU/SEFPO Representatives

Local Executive (LEC)

The local supports the members and communicates with the regional and central union about local issues. Each workplace belongs to a Local, and the Local is run by a Local Executive Committee (LEC). The LEC is made up of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chief Steward. There are also Stewards that support the different units in the local. The LEC meets regularly to discuss local issues. The Local meets with all members at least twice a year at General Membership Meetings (GMM) to discuss local issues. LEC members are elected at GMM's every two years.

Area Councils

Many locals are members of Area or Regional Labour Councils. These labour councils combine the strength of local unions to organize and advocate on issues that are vital to working people throughout the region. These representatives are elected at your local meetings.

OPSEU/SEFPO Regional Representatives

OPSEU/SEFPO is divided into seven regions. Each Region has 3 board members (EBM), and one of these board members is elected as the Regional Vice President (RVP). The EBM's make up the Executive Board of OPSEU/SEFPO.

There are also equity representatives for Human Rights, Young Workers, Racialized Workers, Disabled Workers, Francophone Workers, and LGBTQ2S+ Workers.

All of these representatives can assist with issues that cannot be resolved at the local level, as well as direct folks to other resources that can better help them. These representatives are elected at your Regional Meetings every two years.

You can find your OPSEU/SEFPO Board Members at: <https://opseu.org/opseus-executive-board/>

You can find out more about the OPSEU/SEFPO Equity Unit and Equity Representatives at <https://opseu.org/equity-unit/>

OPSEU/SEFPO Central Representatives

The President and First Vice-President/Treasurer for OPSEU are elected from the 21 EBMs at the OSPEU/SEFPO Convention. The central elections take place every two years at the OPSEU/SEFPO Convention. The President and First Vice-President/Treasurer, along with the seven RVPs are known as the "Officers of the Union".

Representatives from each local are elected annually to attend convention to vote on resolutions and constitutional amendments presented by the locals and area councils.

The Executive Board shall be the governing body of the Union whenever a duly convened convention is not in session.

For more information, please refer to the OPSEU/SEFPO Constitution:

https://opseu.org/information/tools-and-resources/ontario-public-service-employees-union-constitution-2019/#article_17_executive_committee

Employee Relations Committees

Local Employee Relations Committee (LERC)

A Local Employee Relations Committee (LERC) negotiate on equal footing with management to resolve local issues specific to that workplace. The LERC is made up of management reps and OPSEU/SEFPO reps who are elected by the local. You can speak to your unit steward or LEC if you have any questions about your LERC or want to get involved with the LERC. A Regional Employee Relations Committee (RERC) is similar to a LERC's, but for members that work in smaller offices where it is more feasible for the members to meet on a regional level instead of having a LERC for a workplace with 2 employees.

Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) and Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC)

There is also a Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) meets regularly with the employer to discuss issues that affect the whole ministry or multiple workplaces, or unresolved items from LERCs. As well, there is also Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC) meets with the government to discuss unresolved MERC items, and issues related to the whole OPS. MERC and CERC also negotiate agreements with the government outside of bargaining. MERC and CERC OPSEU/SEFPO members are elected at OPS Divisional Meetings every two years.

Joint Health and Safety

All members in the workplace are responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy workplace and holding the employer accountable in the workplace. Depending on your workplace, you will have a health and safety representative, or a Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC). If you have an office with between 6-19 workers, you must have at least one health and safety representative, unless otherwise negotiated with the employer. If you have 20 workers or more in your work, you will have a committee made up of at least 2

management members and 2 OPSEU/SEFPO members. They are responsible for doing regular workplace inspections, posting inspection reports, and educating members on their health and safety rights in the workplace. The OPSEU/SEFPO reps are either elected by the members or appointed by the LEC. Health and Safety in the workplace is regulated primarily by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*, as well as the Collective Agreement and OPS regulations.

OPSEU/SEFPO Staff

OPSEU/SEFPO staff representatives are assigned a bundle of locals in their service area, and they assist these locals with complex issues, educationals, and local elections.

An OSPEU/SEFPO staff negotiator is assigned a bundle of OPS ministries, and they assist the MERC with ministry issues, assist members with job security related issues, and negotiate agreements with the ministry outside of bargaining

JIBRC:

Joint Insurance Benefits Review Committee reviews denials of Dental, Long-Term Income Protection (LTIP), group insurance benefits Basic, Supplementary, and Dependent Insurance.

How to get involved in your union/Where You Can Get Help

You can speak to your LEC, or your local steward, or your staff rep, or your MERC for help or to get more involved to help yourself and other members in OPSEU/SEFPO

If you need extra assistance, you can also reach out to your regional board members, and they will direct you to the appropriate supports

Union Dues

Why does the union collect dues?

Dues are virtually the only source of union funds. OPSEU/SEFPO doesn't get money from employers or government. The power of working together and pooling resources means your relatively small dues contribution creates a huge network of support.

What do I get for my money?

Your dues pay for more than 300 experienced staff, including specialists in bargaining, grievance handling, pensions, pay equity, benefits, health and safety, human rights, communications, education, research, organizing and more. Your dues pay for a network of 20 staffed regional offices and 24 accessible membership centres, bringing OPSEU resources to communities across Ontario. Your dues pay for all member expenses,

including travel, accommodation and meals for bargaining, grievance hearings, education, conventions, and conferences. Your Local doesn't have to cover any of the essential "big ticket" items. Your dues pay for skills training so you and your co-workers can run an effective Local and participate in the decisions affecting the union. Your dues allow you to book off members to do union work without losing pay. Your dues pay for skilled representation if your employer violates your contract.

How does my Local financially operate?

In OPSEU/SEFPO, all major union expenses are covered centrally. Every local, however small, can afford to defend its members and attend important meetings. A portion of your dues come back to your Local as a quarterly rebate. A typical OPSEU/SEFPO Local with about 250 members receives nearly \$15,000 a year to spend as it sees fit.